G. Van't Gucht Sculp

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THEODOSIUS:

OR,

The Force of Love,

A

TRAGEDY.

ACTED BY

Their ROYAL HIGHNESSES Servants,

AT THE

Duke's Theatre.

First Edition.

Written by *NAT. LEE.*

WITH THE

MUSICK betwixt the ACTS.

——Nec minus periculum ex magna
Fama quam ex mala. Tacit.

LONDON,
Printed for *R. Bentley* and *M. Magnes*, in *Russel-street*,
near *Covent-garden.* 1680.

Collated & Perfect. J. D. K. 1790.

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The PERSONS.

Theodosius.	Mr. *Williams.*
Varanes.	Mr. *Betterton.*
Marcian.	Mr. *Smith.*
Lucius.	Mr. *Wiltshire.*
Atticus, *Chief Priest.*	Mr. *Bowman.*
Leontine.	Mr. *Leitherfull.*
Chorus.	
Pulcheria.	Mrs. *Betterton.*
Athenais.	Mrs. *Barry.*
Julia.	
Delia.	
Attendants, Singers.	

The SCENE

CONSTANTINOPLE.

PROLOGUE.

PROLOGUE.

WIT long opprest, and fill'd at last with rage,
Thus in a sullen mood rebukes the Age.
What loads of Fame do modern Hero's bear,
For an inglorious, long, and lazy War?
Who for some Skirmish or a safe Retreat,
(Not to be dragg'd to Battle) are call'd Great.
But oh, what do ambitious States-men gain!
Who into private Chests whole Nations drain?
What sums of Gold they hoard is dayly known,
To all mens cost, and sometimes to their own.
Your Lawyer too, that like an O Yes bawls,
That drowns the Market-Higler in the Stalls,
That seems begot, conceiv'd, and born in brawls;
Yet thrives: He and his crowd get what they please,
Swarming all Term-time thro' the Strand like Bees,
They buz at Westminster, and lye for Fees.
The godly too their ways of getting have;
But none so much as your Phanatick Knave:
Wisely the wealthiest Livings they refuse,
Who by the fattest Bishopricks won'd loose;
Who with short hair, large Ears, and small blue Band,
True Rogues, their own, not Gods Elect, command.
Let Pigs then be profane: but Broths allow'd,
Possets and Christian Caudles may be good,
Meet helps to reinforce a Brothers blood;
Therefore each Female Saint he does advise,
With groans, and hums, and ha's, and gogling eyes,
To rub him down, and make the Spirit rise.
While with his zeal transported, from the ground
He mounts, and sanctifies the Sisters round.
On Poets onely no kind Star e're smill'd;
Curst Fate has damn'd 'em every Mothers Child:
Therefore he warns his Brothers of the Stage
To write no more to an ingrateful age.
Think what penurious Masters you have serv'd;
Tasso ran mad, and noble Spencer starv'd:
Turn then, who e're thou art that canst write well,
Thy Ink to Gaul, and in Lampoons excell.
Forswear all honesty, traduce the Great,
Grow impudent, and rail against the State;
Bursting with spleen, abroad thy Pasquils send,
And chuse some Libel-spreader for thy Friend:
The Wit and Want of Timon point thy mind,
And for thy Satyr-subject chuse Mankind.

THEODOSIUS.

To her Grace the Dutchess of Richmond.

MADAM,

THE Reputation that this Play received on the Stage, some few Errors excepted, was more than I could well hope from so Censorious an Age, from whom I ask but so much necessary Praise as will serve, once or twice a Year at most, to gain their good Company, and just keep me alive.

There is not now that Mankind that was then,
When as the Sun and Man did seem to strive
(Joynt-Tenants of the World) who should survive:
When if a slow-pac'd Star had stolen away,
From the Observer's marking, he might stay
Two or three hundred Years to see't agen,
And then make up his Observation plain. Dr. *Donn.*

For 'tis impossible in our limited Time (and I bring his Opinion to back my own, who is without comparison the best Writer of the Age) to present our Judges a Poem half so perfect as we cou'd make it. I must acknowledge, *Madam*, with all humility, I ought to have taken more time and more pains in this *Tragedy*, because it is dedicated to Your Grace, who being the best Judge, (and therefore can when You please make us tremble) yet with exceeding Mercy have pardon'd the defects of *Theodosius*, and given it Your entire Approbation. My *Genius*, *Madam*, was Your Favourite when the Poet was unknown, and openly receiv'd Your Smiles before I had the Honour to pay Your Grace the most submissive Gratitude for so illustrious and advantageous a Protection. To let the World too know that You do not think it beneath You to be officiously Good, even from extremest Heights to discern the lowest Creatures, and give them all the Noblest Influence You can, You brought Her Royal Highness just at the exigent Time, whose single Presence, on the Poet's Day, is a Subsistence for him all the Year after. Ah, *Madam*, if all the short-liv'd Happiness that miserable Poets can enjoy consit in Commendation only; nay, if the most part are content with Pop'lar Breath, and even for that are thankful: How shall I express my self to Your Grace, who by a particular Goodness, and innate Sweetness, meerly for the sake of doing well, have thus rais'd me above my self. To have Your Grace's Favour is, in a word, to have the Applause of the whole Court, who are its Noblest Ornament, magnificent and eternal Praise. Something there is in Your Mien so much above that we vulgarly call Charming, that to me it seems Adorable, and Your Presence almost Divine, whose dazling and Majestick Form is a proper Mansion for the most elevated Soul: And let me tell the World, nay, sighing speak it to a Barbarous

Age (I cannot help calling it so, when I think of *Rome* and *Greece*) Your extraordinary Love for Heroick Poetry is not the least Argument to shew the Greatness of Your Mind, and fulness of Perfection. To hear You speak with that infinite Sweetness and Chearfulness of Spirit that is natural to Your Grace, is methinks to hear our Tutelar Angels: 'Tis to bemoan the present malicious Times, and remember the Golden Age: But to behold you too, is to make Prophets quite forget their Heaven, and bind the Poets with eternal Rapture.

Here pure and eloquent Blood
Spoke in her Cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,
That one might almost say, her Body thought.

You for whose Body God made better Clay,
Or took Souls Stuff, such as shall late decay,
Or such as need small change at the last day. Dr. *Donn.*

Ziphares and *Semandra* were first Your Grace's Favourites; and though I ought not, *Madam*, to praise Your Wit by your Judgment of my Painting, yet I must say, Such Characters every Dauber cannot draw. It has been often observed against me, That I abound in ungovern'd Fancy; but I hope the World will pardon the Sallies of Youth: Age, Despondence, and Dulness come too fast of themselves. I discommend no Man for keeping the beaten Road; but I am sure the Noble Hunters that follow the Game, must leap Hedges and Ditches sometimes, and run at all, or never come in to the fall of the Quarry. My comfort is, I cannot be so ridiculous a Creature to any Man as I am to my self: for, who should know the House so well as the good Man at home? who, when his Neighbours come to see him, still sets the best Rooms to view; and, if he be not a wilful Ass, keeps the Rubbish and Lumber in some dark Hole, where no body comes but himself, to mortifie at melancholy Hours. But how then, *Madam*, in this unsuitable condition, how shall I answer the infinite Honours and Obligations Your Grace has laid upon me? Your Grace, who is the most beautiful Idea of Love and Glory; who, to that Divine Composition, have the noblest and best-natur'd Wit in the World. All I can promise, *Madam*, and be able to perform, is, That your Grace shall never see a Play of mine that shall give offence to Modesty and Vertue; and what I humbly offer to the World, shall be of use at least, and I hope deserve imitation; which is, or ought to be, I am sure, the Design of all *Tragedies* and *Comedies* both Ancient and Modern. I should presume to promise my self too some Success in things of this nature, if Your Grace (in whom the Charms of Beauty, Wit, and Goodness seem reconcil'd) at a leisure Hour would condescend to correct with Your excellent Judgment, the Errors of,

MADAM,
Your Graces most humble,
most obedient, and devoted Servant,
NAT. LEE.

THEODOSIUS:

OR, THE

Force of Love.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A ſtately Temple, which repreſents the Chriſtian Religion, as in its firſt Magnificence: Being but lately eſtabliſht at Rome *and* Conſtantinople. *The Side Scenes ſhew the horrid Tortures, with which the* Roman *Tyrants perſecuted the Church; and the Flat Scene, which is the Limit of the Proſpect, diſcovers an Altar richly adorn'd, before it* Conſtantine, *ſuppos'd kneels, with Commanders about him, gazing at a bloody Croſs in the Air, which being incompaſs'd with many Angels, offers it ſelf to view, with theſe words diſtinctly written,* (In hoc ſigno vinces!) *Inſtruments are heard, and many Attendants: The Miniſters at Divine Service, walk buſily up and down, till* Atticus, *the Chief of all the Prieſts, and Succeſſor of St.* Chryſoſtom, *in rich Robes, comes forward with the Philoſopher* Leontine: *The Waiters in Ranks bowing all the way before him.*

A Chorus heard at diſtance.

Prepare, prepare! the Rites begin,
Let none unhallow'd enter in,
The Temple with new Glory ſhines,
Adorn the Altars, waſh the Shrines,
And purge the place from Sin.

Attic. O *Leontine!* was ever Morn like this,
Since the Celeſtial Incarnation dawn'd?
I think no Day ſince that, ſuch Glory gave
To Chriſtian Altars, as this Morning brings.

Leon.

Leont. Great Succeſſor of holy *Chryſoſtom*,
Who now triumphs above a Saint of Honour.
Next in degree to thoſe bright Sons of Heav'n;
Who never fell, nor ſtain'd their Orient Beams:
What ſhall I anſwer? How ſhall I approach you
Since my Converſion, which your breath inſpir'd?

Attic. To ſee this Day, th' Emperour of the Eaſt,
Leaves all the Pleaſures that the Earth can yield,
That Nature can beſtow, or Art invent,
In his Life's ſpring, and bloom of gawdy years,
To undergo the Penance of a Cloyſter,
Confin'd to narrow Rooms, and gloomy Walks,
Faſtings, and Exerciſes of Devotion,
Which from his Bed at midnight muſt awake him,
Methinks, O *Leontine!* is ſomething more,
Than yet Philoſophy could ever reach.

Leont. True, *Atticus*; you have amaz'd my reaſon.

Attic. Yet more, to our Religious laſting honour,
Marina and *Flavilla*, two young Virgins,
Imperial born, caſt in the faireſt mould,
That e're the hands of Beauty form'd for Woman;
The Mirrors of our Court, where Chaſtity
And Innocence might copy ſpotleſs Luſtre;
To Day with *Theodoſius* leave the World.

Leont. Methinks at ſuch a glorious reſignation,
The Angelick Orders ſhould at once deſcend,
In all the Paint and Drapery of Heav'n;
With charming Voices, and with lulling Strings,
To give full Grace to ſuch Triumphant Zeal.

Attic. No, *Leontine*; I fear there is a fault:
For when I laſt confeſs'd th' Emperour,
Whether diſguſt and melancholy Blood,
From reſtleſs Paſſions, urg'd not this Divorce?
He only anſwer'd me with Sighs and Bluſhes;
'Tis ſure, his Soul is of the tendereſt make:
Therefore, I'll tax him ſtrictly; but, my Friend,
Why ſhould give his Character to you,
Who when his Father ſent him into *Perſia*,
Were by that mighty Monarch then appointed
To breed him with his Son, the Prince *Varanes*.

Leont. And what will raiſe your Admiration, is,
That two ſuch different Tempers ſhould agree:
You know that *Theodoſius* is compos'd
Of all the ſoftneſs that ſhould make a Woman,
Judgment almoſt like Fear fore-runs his Actions;
And he will poiſe an Injury ſo long,

As if he had rather pardon than revenge it:
But the young *Perſian* Prince quite oppoſite,
So Fiery fierce, that thoſe who view him nearly
May ſee his haughty Soul ſtill mounting in his Face;
Yet did I ſtudy theſe ſo different Tempers,
Till I at laſt had form'd a perfect Union,
As if two Souls did but inform one Body.
A friendſhip that may challenge all the World,
And at the proof be matchleſs.

Attic. I long to read
This Gallant Prince, who, as you have inform'd me,
Comes from his Father's Court to ſee our Emperour.

Leon. So he intended till he came to *Athens*;
And at my homely board beheld my Daughter;
Where, as Fate ordered, ſhe who never ſaw
The Glories of a Court, bred up to Books
In Cloſets like a Sybil. She I ſay,
Long ſince from *Perſia* brought by me to *Athens*!
Unskill'd in Charms, but thoſe which Nature gave her,
Wounded this ſcornful Prince: In ſhort, he forc'd me
To wait him thither, with deep proteſtations,
That Moment that bereft him of the ſight.
Of *Athenais*, gave him certain Death.

Enter Varanes, *and* Athenais.

But ſee my Daughter honour'd with his preſence.

Vara. 'Tis ſtrange! O *Athenais*! wondrous, all
Wondrous the Shrines, and wonderful the Altars!
The Martyrs, though but drawn in painted Flames,
Amaze me with the Image of their ſuff'rings:
Saints Canoniz'd that dar'd with *Roman* Tyrants.
Hermits that liv'd in Caves, and fed with Angels,
By *Oroſmades*, it is wondrous all.
That bloody Croſs, in yonder Azure Sky,
Above the Head of kneeling *Conſtantine*;
Inſcrib'd about with Golden Characters:
Thou ſhalt o'er-come in this. If it be true,
I ſay again, by Heav'n 'tis wond'rous ſtrange.

Athen. O Prince, if thus Imagination ſtirs you;
A fancy rais'd from figures in dead Walls,
How would the Sacred Breath of *Atticus*
Inſpire your Breaſt, purge all your droſs away,
And drive this *Athenais* from your Soul,
To make a Virgin Room, whom yet the Mould
Of your rude Fancy cannot comprehend.

Vara.

Vara. What ſays my Fair? Drive *Athenais* from me:
Start me not into Frenzy, leſt I rail
At all Religion, and fall out with Heaven:
And what is ſhe alas! that ſhould ſupplant thee?
Were ſhe the Miſtreſs of the World, as fair
As Winter Stars, or Summer ſetting Suns,
And thou ſet by in Nature's plaineſt Dreſs,
With that chaſte modeſt look when firſt I ſaw thee?
The Heireſs of a poor Philoſopher, [*Recorders ready to flouriſh.*
I ſwear by all I wiſh, by all I love,
Glory and thee, I would not loſe a thought,
Nor caſt an Eye that way, but ruſh to thee,
To theſe lov'd arms, and loſe my ſelf for ever.

Athenais. Forbear, my Lord.

Vara. O cruel *Athenais*!
Why doſt thou put me off, who pine to death?
And thruſt me from thee when I would approach thee?
Can there be ought in this? Curſe then thy birth-right,
Thy glorious Titles and ill-ſuited Greatneſs,
Since *Athenais* ſcorns thee: Take again
Your ill-tim'd Honours; take 'em, take 'em Gods!
And change me to ſome humble Villager,
If ſo at leaſt for toils at ſcorching Noon,
In mowing Meadows, or in reaping Fields,
At night ſhe will but crown me with a ſmile,
Or reach the bounty of her hand to bleſs me.

Athen. When Princes ſpeak, their Subjects ſhould be ſilent,
Yet with humility I would demand,
Wherein appears my ſcorn, or my averſion?
Have I not for your ſake abandon'd home,
Where I had vow'd to ſpend my calmer days?
But you perhaps imagine it but little
For a poor Maid to follow you abroad,
Eſpecially the Daughter of old *Leontine*,
Yet I muſt tell you Prince———

Vara. I cannot bear
Thoſe Frowns: I have offended, but forgive me.
For who, *Athenais*, that is toſs'd
With ſuch tempeſtuous tydes of love as I,
Can ſteer a ſteady courſe? Retire, my Fair, [*Recorders flouriſh.*
Hark! the Solemnities are now beginning,
And *Theodoſius* comes: Hide, hide thy Charms,
If to his clouded Eyes ſuch Day ſhould break,
The Royal Youth who dotes to Death for Love,
I fear would forfeit all his Vows to Heav'n,
And fix upon thy World, thy World of Beauty. [*Exeunt.*

Enter

Enter Theodoſius *leading* Marina *and* Flavilla (*all three dreſt in white*) *followed by* Pulcheria.

Theo. Farewel, *Pulcheria!* and I pray, no more:
For all thy kind Complaints are loſt upon me.
Have I not ſworn the World and I muſt part?
Fate has proclaim'd it, therefore weep no more,
Wound not the tendereſt part of *Theodoſius*,
My yielding Soul, that would expire in Calms!
Wound me not with thy Tears, and I will tell thee,
Yet e're I take my laſt farewel for ever,
The cauſe of all my ſufferings: O, my Siſter!
A bleeding Heart, the ſtings of pointed Love,
What Conſtitution ſoft as mine can bear?

Pulch. My Lord, my Emp'rour, my deareſt Brother,
Why all this while did you conceal it from me?

Theo. Becauſe I was aſham'd to own my Weakneſs,
I knew thy ſharper Wit, and ſtricter Wiſdom
Would dart Reproofs, which I could not endure
Draw near, O *Atticus*, and mark me well,
For never yet did my complaining Spirit
Unlaid this weighty Secret upon him,
Nor groan a ſyllable of her Oppreſſion.

Attic. Concealment was a fault; but ſpeak at large,
Make bare the Wound, and I will pour in Balm.

Theo. 'Tis folly all, and fondneſs——O, remembrance!
Why doſt thou open thus my Wound again,
And from my Heart call down thoſe warmer drops
That make me die with ſhame? Hear then, *Pulcheria*:
Some few preceding days before I left
The *Perſian* Court, hunting one morning early,
I loſt my ſelf and all the Company,
Still wandring on as Fortune would direct me,
I paſt a Rivulet, and alighted in
The ſweeteſt Solitude I ever ſaw!
When ſtreight, as if Enchantment had been there,
Two charming Voices drew me 'till I came,
Where divers Arbours over-lookt the River.
Upon the Oſier Bank two Women ſate,
Who, when their Song was ended, talkt to one,
Who, bathing, ſtood far in the Chryſtal ſtream.
But, oh, what thought can paint that fair Perfection,
Or give a glimpſe of ſuch a naked Glory!
Not Sea-born *Venus*, in the Courts beneath,
When the green Nymphs firſt kiſs'd her Coral Lips,

All poliſht, fair, and waſht with Orient Beauty,
Could in my dazling Fancy match her brightneſs.

Attic. Think where you are?

Theo. O! Sir, you muſt forgive me,
The chaſte Enthuſiaſtick Form appears,
As when I ſaw her; yet I ſwear, *Pulcheria*,
Had cold *Diana* been a looker on,
She muſt have prais'd the Vertues of the Virgin,
The *Satyrs* could not grin, for ſhe was veil'd:
Nothing immodeſt, from her naked Boſom
Down to her knees, the Nymph was wrapt in Lawn:
But oh for me! for me, that was too much!
Her Legs, her Arms, her Hands, her Neck, her Breaſts,
So nicely ſhap'd, ſo matchleſs in their Luſtre!
Such all-perfection, that I took whole draughts
Of killing Love, and ever ſince have languiſht
With lingring ſurfeits of her fatal Beauty!
Alas, too fatal ſure! O *Atticus!*
Forgive me, for my ſtory now is done,
The Nymph was dreſt, and with her two Companions,
Having deſcry'd me, ſhriekt and fled away,
Leaving me motionleſs, till *Leontine*,
Th' Inſtructer of my Youth, by chance came in,
And wak'd me from the wonder that entranc'd me.

Attic. Behold, my Lord, the Man whom you have nam'd,
The Harbinger of Prince *Varanes* here.

Theod. O *Leontine*! ten thouſand Welcomes meet thee!
Thou Foſter-Father of my tender Youth,
Who rear'd the Plant, and prun'd it with ſuch Care;
How ſhall I look upon thee, who am fallen
From all the Principles of manlier reaſon,
By thee infus'd, to more than Woman's weakneſs?
Now by the Majeſty Divine, that aws
This ſacred place, I ſwear you muſt not kneel:
And tell me, for I have a thouſand things
To ask thee; Where, where is my Godlike Friend?
Is he arriv'd, and ſhall I ſee his Face,
Before I am cloyſter'd from the World for ever?

Leont. He comes, my Lord, with all the expecting Joys
Of a young promis'd Lover, from his Eyes
Big hopes look forth, and boiling Fancy forms
Nothing but *Theodoſius* ſtill before him;
His thought, his every word, is *Theodoſius*.

Theo. Yet *Leontine*, yet anſwer me once more:
With tremblings I demand thee.
Say——haſt thou ſeen? Oh, has that Heav'nly form

Appear'd

Appear'd to thee again? Behold he's dumb:
Proceed then to the Solemn last farewel;
Never was Man so willing, and prepar'd.

Enter Varanes, Aranthes, *Attendants.*

Vara. Where is my Friend! oh where is my belov'd,
My *Theodosius*! point him out ye Gods,
That I may press him dead betwixt my Arms;
Devour him thus with over-hasty Joys,
That languish at his Breast, quite out of breath,
And cannot utter more.

Theo. Thou mightiest Pleasure!
And greatest Blessing, that kind Heav'n could send,
To glad my parting Soul, a thousand Welcomes!
O, when I look on thee, new starts of Glory
Spring in my Breast, and with a backward bound
I run the Race of lusty Youth again.

Vara. By Heav'n it joys me too, when I remember
Our thousand Pastimes, when we borrow'd Names;
Alcides, I, and Thou, my dearest *Theseus*,
When through the Woods, we chas'd the foaming Boar,
With Hounds that open'd like *Thessalian* Bulls,
Like Tygers siu'd, and sanded as the shoar,
With Ears, and Chests, that dasht the morning Dew:
Driv'n with the Sport, as Ships are tost in Storms,
We ran like Winds, and matchless was our Course;
Now sweeping o'er the limit of a Hill!
Now with a full Career come thundring down
The Precipice! and sweat along the Vale.

Theo. O glorious time! and when the gathering Clouds
Have call'd us home, say, Did we rest, my Brother?
When on the Stage, to the admiring Court,
We strove to represent *Alcides* Fury,
In all that raging Heat, and pomp of Madness,
With which the stately *Seneca* adorn'd him:
So lively drawn, and painted with such horror,
That we were forc'd to give it o'er; so loud
The Virgins shriek'd, so fast they dy'd away.

Vara. My *Theodosius* still; 'tis my lov'd Brother;
And by the Gods we'll see those times agen!
Why then has Rumour wrong'd thee, that reported
Christian Enthusiasm had charm'd thee from us,
That drawn by Priests, and work'd by Melancholy,
Thou hadst laid the golden Reins of Empire down,
And sworn thy self a Votary for ever?

Theo. 'Tis almost true; and had not you arriv'd,

The ſolemn buſineſs had by this been ended.
This I have made the Empreſs of the Eaſt,
My elder Siſter: Theſe with me retire,
Devoted to the Pow'r, whom we adore.
Vara. What Power is that that merits ſuch Oblations?
I thought the Sun more great and glorious,
Than any that e're mingled with the Gods;
Yet even to him my Father never offer'd
More than a Hecatomb of Bulls and Horſes:
Now by thoſe golden Beams, that glad the World,
I ſwear it is too much: For one of theſe,
But half ſo bright, our God would drive no more,
He'd leave the darken'd Globe, and in ſome Cave
Injoy ſuch Charms for ever.
Attic. My Lord, forbear!
Such Language does not ſuit with our Devotion:
Nothing prophane muſt dare to murmur here.
Nor ſtain the hallow'd Beauties of the Place.
Yet thus far we muſt yield; the Emperour
Is not enough prepar'd to leave the World.
Vara. Thus low, moſt Reverend of this ſacred place,
I kneel for Pardon, and am half converted,
By your permiſſion that my *Theodoſius*
Return to my Embraces. O my Brother!
Why doſt thou droop? There will be time enough
For Prayer and Faſting, and Religious Vows;
Let us enjoy, while yet thou art my own,
All the Magnificence of Eaſtern Courts;
I hate to walk a lazy Life away:
Let's run the Race which Fate has ſet before us,
And poſt to the dark Goal.
Theo. Cruel Deſtiny!
Why am not I thus too? O my *Varanes!*
Why are theſe coſtly Diſhes ſet before me?
Why do theſe ſounds of Pleaſure ſtrike my Ears?
Why are theſe Joys brought to my ſick remembrance;
Who have no appetite; but am to ſenſe,
From Head to Foot, all a dead Palſie o're?
Vara. Fear not, my Friend, all ſhall be well again,
For I have thouſand ways, and thouſand ſtories
To raiſe thee up to Pleaſure, we'll unlock
Our faſteſt Secrets, ſhed upon each other
Our tender'ſt Cares, and quite unbarr thoſe Doors,
Which ſhall be ſhut to all Mankind beſide.
Attic. Silence and Reverence are the Temple's dues:
Therefore, while we purſue the Sacred Rites,

Be these observ'd, or quit the awful place,
Imperial Sisters, now twin-stars of Heaven,
Answer the Successor of *Chrysostom*;
Without least Reservation answer me;
By those harmonious Rules I charg'd ye learn.

Atticus Sings.

Attic. *Canst thou*, Marina, *leave the World,*
The World that is Devotion's bane;
Where Crowns are tost, and Scepters hurld,
Where Lust and proud Ambition Reign?

2 Priest. *Can you your costly Robes forbear,*
To live with us in poor Attire?
Can you from Courts to Cells repair,
To sing at midnight in our Quire?

3 Priest. *Can you forget your golden Beds,*
Where you might sleep beyond the morn,
On Mats to lay your Royal Heads,
And have your beauteous Tresses shorn?

Attic. *Can you resolve to fast all Day,*
And weep and groan to be forgiv'n?
Can you in broken slumbers pray,
And by affliction merit Heav'n?

Chor. *Say, Votaries, can this be done,*
While we the Grace Divine implore,
The World has lost, the Battel's won;
And sin shall never charm ye more?

Marina Sings. *The gate to Bliss does open stand,*
And all my penance is in view;
The World upon the other hand
Crys out, O do not bid adieu!

Yet, Sacred Sirs, in these extreams,
Where Pomp and Pride their Glories tell;
Where Youth and Beauty are the Themes,
And plead their moving Cause so well.

If ought that's vain my thoughts possess,
Or any Passions govern here,
But what Divinity may bless;
O may I never enter there!

Fla-

Flavilla *What! what can Pomp or Glory do;*
Sings. Or what can humane Charms perswade,
That Mind that has a Heav'n in view,
How can it be by Earth betray'd!

No Monarch full of Youth and Fame,
The Joy of Eyes, and Natures Pride,
Should once my thoughts from Heav'n Reclaim!
Though now he woo'd me for his Bride.

Haste then, Oh haste! and take us in,
For ever lock Religion's Door,
Secure us from the Charms of sin,
And let us see the World no more.

Attic. *Hark! hark! behold the Heavenly Choir,*
Sings. They cleave the Air in bright Attire,
And see his Lute each Angel brings,
And hark Divinely thus he Sings!
To the Pow'rs Divine, all glory be given,
By Men upon Earth, and Angels in Heaven.

Scene shuts, and all the Priests with Marina, *and* Flav. *disappear.*

Pulch. For ever gone! for ever parted from me!
O *Theodosius*, till this cruel moment
I never knew how tenderly I lov'd 'em;
But on this everlasting separation,
Methinks my Soul has left me, and my Time
Of dissolution points me to the Grave.

Theo. O my *Varanes*, does not now thy temper
Bate something of its fire? dost thou not melt
In meer Compassion of my Sister's Fate,
And cool thy self with one relenting thought?

Vara. Yes, my dar'd Soul rouls inward, melancholy,
Which I ne'er felt before, now comes upon me;
And I begin to loath all humane greatness.
Oh! sigh not then, nor thy hard Fate deplore!
For, 'tis resolv'd, we will be Kings no more:
We'll fly all Courts, and Love shall be our guide;
Love that's more worth than all the World beside.
Princes are barr'd the liberty to roam,
The fetter'd mind still languishes at home;
In golden Bands she treads the thoughtful round,
Business and Cares eternally abound.
"And when for Air the Goddess would unbind,
"She's clogg'd with Scepters, and to Crowns confin'd. [*Exeunt.*

ACT

ACT II. SCENE I.

Enter Pulcheria, Julia, *Attendants.*

Pulch. THeſe Packets for the Emperour *Honorius*;
Be ſwift, let the Agent haſte to *Rome*——
I hear, my *Julia*, that our General
Is from the *Goths* return'd with Conqueſt home.
Jul. He is; to day I ſaw him in the Preſence,
Sharp to the Courtiers, as he ever was:
Becauſe they went not with him to the Wars.
To you he bows, and ſues to kiſs your Hand.
Pulch. He ſhall, my deareſt *Julia*; oft I have told thee
The ſecret of my Soul: If e'er I marry,
Marcian's my Husband; he is a Man, my *Julia*,
Whom I have ſtudy'd long, and found him perfect:
Old *Rome* at every glance looks through his Eyes,
And kindles the Beholders: Some ſharp Atomes
Run through his Frame, which I could wiſh were out.
He ſickens at the ſoftneſs of the Emperour,
And ſpeaks too freely of our Female Court;
Then ſighs, comparing it with what *Rome* was.

Enter Marcian *and* Lucius.

Pulch. Ha! Who are theſe that dare prophane this place
With more than barb'rous Inſolence?
Marc. At your Feet,
Behold I caſt the ſcourge of theſe Offenders,
And kneel to kiſs your Hand.
Pulch. Put up your Sword,
And e'er I bid you welcome from the Wars,
Be ſure you clear your Honour of this rudeneſs;
Or, *Marcian*, leave the Court.
Marc. Thus then, Madam;
The Emperour receiv'd me with affection,
Embrac'd me for my Conqueſts, and retir'd;
When on a ſudden all the gilded Flies
That buz about the Court came flutt'ring round me:
This with affected Cringes, and minc'd Words,
Begs me to tell my Tale of Victories;
Which done, he thanks me, ſlips behind his Fellow,
Whiſpers him in the Ear, then ſmiles and liſtens,
While I relate my Story once again:

A third comes in, and asks me the ſame favour:
Whereon they laugh, while I ſtill ignorant
Go on; but one behind, more impudent,
Strikes on my Shoulder; then they laught out-right,
But then I gueſſing the abuſe too late,
Return'd my Knight behind a box o'th' Ear;
Then drew, and briefly told them they were Raſcals.
They, laughing ſtill, cry'd out the General's muſty,
Whereon I drove 'em, Madam, as you ſaw:
This is in ſhort the Truth, I leave the Judgment
To your own Juſtice; if I have done ill,
Sentence me, and I'll leave the Court for ever.

Pulch. Firſt you are welcome, *Marcian*, from the Wars;
And ſtill when e'er occaſion calls for Arms,
Heav'n ſend th' Emperor a General
Renown'd as *Marcian*; as to what is paſt,
I think the World will rather praiſe than cenſure
Pulcheria, when ſhe pardons you the Action.

Marc. Gods! Gods! and thou great Founder of Old *Rome!*
What is become of all that mighty Spirit,
That rais'd our Empire to a pitch ſo high?
Where is it pent? What, but Almighty Power
Could thus confine it, that but ſome few Atoms
Now run through all the Eaſt and Occident?

Pulch. Speak calmly, *Marcian*——

Marc. Who can be temperate,
That thinks as I do, Madam? Why here's a Fellow,
I have ſeen him fight againſt a Troop of *Vandals*
In your Defence, as if he lov'd to bleed:
Come to my arms, my Dear! Thou canſt not talk,
But haſt a Soul above the proudeſt of 'em.
O, Madam, when he has been all over Blood,
And hackt with Wounds that ſeem'd to mouth his Praiſes;
I have ſeen him ſmile ſtill as he puſht Death from him,
And with his actions rally diſtant Fate.

Pulch. He has a noble Form.

Marc. Yet ev'n this Man,
That fought ſo bravely in his Country's Cauſe,
This excellent Man this Morning in the Preſence,
Did I ſee wrong'd before the Emperour,
Scorn'd and deſpis'd becauſe he could not cringe,
Nor plant his Feet as ſome of them could do.
One ſaid his Cloaths were not well made, and damn'd
His Taylor——Another ſaid, he look'd
As if he had not loſt his Maiden-head.
If things are ſuffer'd to be thus, down all

Authority, Preeminence, Degree and Vertue.
Let *Rome* be never mention'd, no, in the Name
Of all the Gods, be ſhe forgotten ever,
Effeminate *Perſians*, and the *Lydian* ſoftneſs,
Make all your Fights, *Marcian* ſhall out no more;
For by my Arms it makes a Woman of me;
And my ſwoln Eyes run o'er to think this worth,
This fuller Honour than the whole Court holds,
Should be ridiculous to Knaves and Fools;
Should ſtarve for want of what is neceſſary
To Life's Convenience. When luxurious Bawds
Are ſo o'er grown with Fat, and cram'd with Riot,
That they can hardly walk without an Engine.

Pulch. Why did you not inform the Emperour?

Marc. Becauſe he will not hear me: Alas, good Man!
He flies from this bad World, and ſtill when Wars
And Dangers come, he runs to his Devotions,
To your new thing, I know not what you call it,
Which *Conſtantine* began.

Pulch. How, *Marcian!* are not you of that
Religion which the Emperour owns?

Marc. No, Madam, if you'll ſee my naked thought,
I am not of their Principle, that take
A wrong; ſo far from bearing with a Foe,
I would ſtrike firſt, like old *Rome*; I wou'd forth,
Elbow the neighbouring Nations round about,
Invade, enlarge my Empire to the bounds
Of the too narrow Univerſe. Yes, I own
That I deſpiſe your holy Innovations.
I am for the *Roman* Gods, for Funeral Piles,
For mounting Eagles, and the fancied greatneſs
Of our Fore-Fathers. Methinks my heated Spirit
Cou'd utter things worth loſing of my Head.

Pulch. Speak freely, *Marcian*, for I know thee honeſt.

Marc. O, Madam! long, long may the Emperour live;
But, I muſt ſay, his gentle Diſpoſition
Suits not, alas, the Oriental ſway:
Bid him but look on *Pharamond*: O Gods!
Awake him with the Image of that Spirit,
Which, like a Pyramid revers'd, is grown
Ev'n from a point to the moſt dreadful greatneſs;
His very Name already ſhakes the World;
And ſtill in Perſon heading his firſt Squadrons,
Like the firſt *Cæſar* o'er the hardy *Gauls*,
He ſeems another Thunderbolt of War.

Pulch. I oft have blam'd my Brother moſt for this,

That to my hand he leaves the State Affairs:
And how that ſounds, you know———
Mar. Forgive me, Madam;
I think that all the greatneſs of your Sex,
Rome's *Clelia*, and the fam'd *Semiramis*,
With all th' *Amazonian* Valour too,
Meet in *Pulcheria*; yet, I ſay, forgive me,
If with reluctance I behold a Woman
Sit at the Empire's Helm, and ſteer the World.
Pulch. I ſtand rebuk'd———
Marc. Mark but the growing *French*.
The moſt auſpicious Omen of their greatneſs,
That I can gueſs, is their late *Salique* Law,
Bleſt by their Prieſts, the *Salii*, and pronounc'd
To ſtand for ever; which excludes all Women
From the Imperial Crown: But, oh! I ſpeak
The leaſt of all thoſe infinite grievances,
Which make the Subjects murmur: In the Army,
Tho' I proceeded ſtill like *Hannibal*,
And puniſht ev'ry Mutineer with Death;
Yet, oh! it ſtabb'd me through and through the Soul
To paſs the Wretches Doom, becauſe I knew
With Juſtice they complain'd; for hard they fought,
And with their Blood earn'd that forbidden Bread,
Which ſome at Court, and great ones, though un-nam'd,
Caſt to their Hounds, while the poor Soldier's ſtarv'd———
Pulch. Your pity too in mournful fellowſhip,
No doubt might ſooth their murmurs.
Marc. Yes, it did,
That I might put 'em once again in heart,
I ſaid 'twas true, the Emperour was to blame,
Who dealt too coldly with his faithful Servants,
And paid their great Arrears by ſecond hand:
I promis'd too, when we return'd to Court,
Things ſhould be mended———.
But how! oh Gods! forgive my Blood this Tranſport!
To the Eternal Shame of Female Councils!
And to the blaſt of *Theodoſius* Name,
Whom never Warlike Chronicle ſhall mention!
O let me ſpeak it with a *Roman* Spirit,
We were receiv'd like undone Prodigals,
By curſt ungrateful Stewards, with cold looks;
Who yet got all by thoſe poor Wretches ruine.
Like Malefactors, at the hands of Juſtice,
I bluſh, I almoſt weep with burſting rage;
If thus receiv'd, how paid our long Arrears?

Why

Why, as intruſted Miſers pay the Rights
Of helpleſs Widows, or the Orphans Tears.
O Soldier, for to thee, to Thee I ſpeak it,
Bawd's for the drudgery of Citizens Wives,
Would better pay debilitated Stallions.
Madam, I have ſaid perhaps too much; if ſo,
It matters not, for he who lies, like me,
On the hard ground, is ſure to fall no further.

Pulch. I have given you patient hearing, honeſt *Marcian!*
And, as far as I can ſee into your Temper,
I ſpeak my ſerious Judgment in cold Blood,
With ſtricteſt Conſultation on the matter;
I think this ſeeming plain and honeſt, *Marcian*,
An exquiſite and moſt notorious Traytor.

Marc. Ha! Traytor!

Pulch. Yes, a moſt notorious Traytor.

Marc. Your Grandfather, whoſe Frown could awe the World,
Would not have call'd me ſo——or if he had——

Pulch. You would have taken it——But to the Buſineſs,
Was't not enough! Oh Heaven! Thou know'ſt, too much!
At firſt to own your ſelf an Infidel,
A bold Contemner, even to Blaſphemy,
Of that Religion which we all profeſs;
For which your Heart's beſt Blood can ne'er ſuffice:
But you muſt dare, with a ſeditious Army,
Thus to conſpire againſt the Emperour;
I mention not your Impudence to me,
Taxing the folly of my Government,
Ev'n to my Face: Such an Irreverence,
As ſure no barb'rous *Vandal* would have urg'd;
Beſide your libelling all the Court, as if
You had engroſt the whole World's honeſty:
And Flatterers, Fools, Sycophants, Knaves,
Such was your Language, did inhabit here.

Marc. You wreſt my honeſt meaning, by the Gods
You do, and if you thus go on, I feel
My ſtrugling Spirit will no longer bear it.

Pulch. I thought the meaning of all rational Men
Should ſtill be gather'd out of their Diſcourſe;
Nor are you ſo imprudent, without thinking,
To vent ſuch words, tho' now you fain would hide it;
You find the Guilt, and bauk the Accuſation:
But think not you ſhall ſcape ſo eaſily!
Once more I do confront you, as a Traytor;
And as I am entruſted with full pow'r,
Diveſt you, in the Name of *Theodoſius*,

Of all your Offices, Commissions, Honours,
Command you leave the Court within three Days,
Loyal, plain-dealing, honest *Marcian*.

Marc. Gods! Gods!

Pulch. What now! ha! does the Traytor murmur?
If in three days! mark me; 'tis I that doom thee!
Rash inconsiderable Man, a Wretch beneath
The Torments I cou'd execute upon thee!
If after three days space thou'rt found in Court,
Thou dy'st! thy head, thy head shall pay the forfeit.
Farewell: now rage! now rail and curse the Court;
Saucily dare to abuse the best of Princes,
And let thy lawless Tongue lash all it can;
Do, like a mad-man rave! deplore thy Fortune,
While Pages laugh at thee. Then haste to the Army,
Grow popular, and lead the multitude:
Preach up thy Wrongs, and drive the giddy Beast
To kick at *Cæsar*. Nay, if thou weep'st, I am gone.
O *Julia!* if I stay, I shall weep too.
Yet 'tis but just that I the Heart should see
Of him who once must Lord it over me. [*Ex.* Pulcheria, *&c.*

Luc. Why do you droop, Sir——Come, no more o' this,
You are and shall be still our General:
Say but the Word, I'll fill the Hippodrome
With Squadrons that shall make the Emp'ror tremble;
We'll fire the Court about his Ears.
Methinks like *Junius Brutus* I have watcht
An Opportunity, and now it comes!
Few words and I are Friends; but, noble *Marcian*,
If yet thou art not more than General,
E'er dead of Night, say *Lucius* is a Coward.

Marc. I charge thee in the name of all the Gods,
Come back. I charm thee by the name of Friend.
All's well, and I rejoyce I am no General.
But hush! within three days we must be gone,
And then, my Friend, farewel to Ceremony.
We'll fly to some far distant lonely Village,
Forget our former state, and breed with Slaves.
Sweat in the Eye of Day, and when Night comes,
With bodies coursely fill'd, and vacant Souls,
Sleep like the labour'd Hinds, and never think;
For if I think again, I shall go mad.

Enter Leontine *and* Athenais, *&c.*

Therefore no thought. But see, we are interrupted!
O Court! O Emperor! yet let Death threaten,

I'll find a time. Till then be ſtill my Soul——
No General now? A Member of thy Country,
But moſt corrupt, therefore to be cut off,
Loyal, plain-dealing, honeſt *Marcian!*
A Slave, a Traytor! O ye Eternal Gods—— [*Exeunt.*

Leon. So, *Athenais!* now our complement,
To the young *Perſian* Prince, is at an end,
What then remains but that we take our leave,
And bid him everlaſtingly Farewell?

Athen. My Lord!

Leon. I ſay that decency requires
We ſhould be gone, nor can you ſtay with Honour.

Athen. Moſt true, my Lord.

Leon. The Court is now at peace,
The Emperour's Siſters are retir'd for ever,
And he himſelf compos'd; what hinders then,
But that we bid adieu to Prince *Varanes?*

Athen. Ah, Sir, why will you break my heart?

Leon. I would not;
Thou art the only Comfort of my Age;
Like an old Tree I ſtand among the ſtorms,
Thou art the only limb that I have left me: [*She kneels.*
My dear green branch, and how I prize thee, Child,
Heaven only knows! why doſt thou kneel and weep?

Athen. Becauſe you are ſo good, and will I hope
Forgive my fault, who firſt occaſion'd it.

Leon. I charg'd thee to receive and hear the Prince.

Athen. You did, and, Oh, my Lord! I heard too much!
Too much I fear for my Eternal Quiet.

Leon. Riſe, *Athenais!* Credit him who bears
More years than thou: *Varanes* has deceiv'd thee.

Athen. How do we differ then? You judge the Prince
Impious and baſe; while I take Heav'n to witneſs,
I think him the moſt Vertuous of men:
Therefore take heed, my Lord, how you accuſe him,
Before you make the Tryal. Alas, *Varanes,*
If thou art falſe, there's no ſuch thing on Earth
As ſolid Goodneſs, or ſubſtantial Honour.
A thouſand times, My Lord, he has ſworn to give me
(And I believe his Oaths) his Crown and Empire,
That day I make him Maſter of my Heart.

Leon. That day he'll make thee Miſtreſs of his power,
Which carries a foul name among the Vulgar.
No, *Athenais!* let me ſee thee dead,
Born a pale Corps, and gently laid in Earth,
So I may ſay ſhe's chaſte, and dy'd a Virgin,

Rather

Rather than view thee with these wounded Eyes
Seated upon the Throne of *Isdigerdes*,
The blast of Common Tongues, the Nobles scorn,
Thy Father's Curse; that is, the Prince's Whore.

Athen. O horrid supposition! how I detest it!
Be witness Heav'n, that sees my secret thoughts!
Have I for this, my Lord, been taught by you
The nicest Justice, and severest Vertue,
To fear no Death, to know the end of Life,
And with a long search discern the highest good?
No, *Athenais*! when the Day beholds thee
So scandalously rais'd, Pride cast the down,
The scorn of Honour, and the People's prey!
No, cruel *Leontine*, not to redeem
That aged Head from the descending Axe,
Not tho' I saw thy trembling Body rackt,
Thy wrinckles about thee fill'd with Blood,
Would I for Empire, to the Man I love,
Be made the object of unlawful Pleasure.

Leon. O greatly said, and by the Blood which warms me,
Which runs as rich as any *Athens* holds,
It would improve the Vertue of the World,
If every Day a thousand Votaries,
And thousand Virgins came from far to hear thee!

Athen. Look down ye pow'rs, take notice we obey
The rigid Principles ye have infus'd;
Yet oh my noble Father! to convince you,
Since you will have it so, propose a Marriage;
Tho with the thought I am covered o're with Blushes,
Not that I doubt the Prince, that were to doubt
The Heavens themselves. I know he is all truth:
But modesty———
The Virgins troublesome and constant guest,
That, that alone forbids———

Leon. I wish to Heav'n
There prove no greater bar to my belief:
Behold the Prince, I will retire a while,
And, when occasion calls, come to thy aid. [*Ex. L*

Enter Varanes, *and* Aranthes.

Vara. To fix her on the Throne, to me, seems little,
Were I a God, yet would I raise her higher.
This is the nature of thy Prince: But oh!
As to the World thy judgment soars above me,
And I am dar'd with this Gigantick Honour;

Glory

Glory forbids her proſpect to a Crown,
Nor muſt ſhe gaze that way; my haughty Soul,
That day when ſhe aſcends the Throne of *Cyrus*,
Will leave my Body pale, and to the Stars
Retire in Bluſhes, loſt, quite loſt for ever,
Aran. What do you purpoſe then?
Vara. I know not what,
But ſee ſhe comes, the glory of my arms,
The only buſineſs of my inſtant thought,
My Souls beſt Joy, and all my true repoſe.
I ſwear I cannot bear theſe ſtrange deſires,
Theſe ſtrong impulſes which will ſhortly leave me
Dead at thy Feet——
Athen. What have you found, my Lord,
In me ſo harſh or cruel, that you fear
To ſpeak your griefs?
Vara. Firſt let me kneel and ſwear,
And on thy hand ſeal my Religious Vow,
Streight let the breath of Gods blow me from Earth,
Swept from the Book of Fame, forgotten ever,
If I prefer thee not, O *Athenais*,
To all the *Perſian* greatneſs!
Athen. I believe you!
For I have heard you ſwear as much before.
Vara. Haſt thou? O why then did I ſwear again?
But that my Love knew nothing worthier of thee,
And could no better way expreſs my Paſſion.
Athen. O riſe, my Lord——
Vara. I will do every thing
Which *Athenais* bids: If there be more
In Nature to convince thee of my Love,
Whiſper it, oh ſome God, into my Ear!
And on her Breaſts thus to her liſtning Soul
I'll breath th'Inſpiration! Wilt thou not ſpeak?
What but one ſigh, no more! Can that ſuffice
For all my vaſt expence of Prodigal Love?
O *Athenais*! What ſhall I ſay or do,
To gain the thing I wiſh?
Athen. What's that, my Lord?
Vara. Thus to approach thee ſtill! thus to behold thee——
Yet there is more——
Athen. My Lord, I dare not hear you.
Vara. Why doſt thou frown at what thou doſt not know
'Tis an imagination which ne'er pierc'd thee;
Yet as 'tis raviſhing, 'tis full of Honour.
Athen. I muſt not doubt you, Sir: But oh I tremble

To

To think if *Isdigerdes* should behold you,
Should hear you thus protesting to a Maid
Of no Degree, but Vertue, in the World——
Vara. No more of this, no more; for I disdain
All Pomp when thou art by; far be the noise
Of Kings and Courts from us, whose gentle Souls
Our kinder Stars have steer'd another way.
Free as the Forest-Birds, we'll pair together,
Without remembring who our Fathers were;
Fly to the Arbors, Grots, and flow'ry Meads,
And in soft murmurs interchange our Souls.
Together drink the Chrystal of the stream,
Or taste the yellow Fruit which Autumn yields,
And when the Golden Evening calls us home,
Wing to our Downy Nest, and sleep till Morn.
Athen. Ah Prince! no more!
Forbear, forbear to charm me,
Since I am doom'd to leave you, Sir, for ever.
Vara. Hold, *Athenais*——
Athen. I know your Royal Temper,
And that high Honour reigns within your Breast,
Which would disdain to wast so many hours
With one of humble blood compar'd to you:
Unless strong passion sway'd your thoughts to love her,
Therefore receive, oh Prince! and take it kindly,
For none on Earth but you could win it from me,
Receive the gift of my Eternal Love.
'Tis all I can bestow, nor is it little,
For sure a heart so coldly chaste as mine,
No Charms but yours, my Lord, could e'er have warm'd!
Vara. Well have you made amends by this last comfort,
For the cold Dart you shot at me before,
For this last Goodness? (Oh, my *Athenais*!)
(For now, methinks, I ought to call you mine!)
I empty all my Soul in thanks before you:
Yet oh! one Fear remains, like Death it chills me;
Why my relenting Love did talk of parting!
Athen. Look there, and cease your wonder, I have sworn
To obey my Father and he calls me hence——

Enter Leontine.

Vara. Ha, *Leontine*! by which of all my Actions
Have I so deeply injur'd thee, to merit
The smartest wound revenge could form to end me?
Leon. Answer me now, O Prince! for vertue prompts me,
And honesty will dally now no longer,

What

What can the end of all this Paſſion be,
Glory requires this ſtrict accompt, and asks
What you intend at laſt to *Athenais?*

Vara. How, *Leontine!*

Leon. You ſaw her, Sir, at *Athens*; ſaid you lov'd her,
I charg'd her humbly to receive the Honour,
And hear your Paſſion: Has ſhe not, Sir, obey'd me?

Vara. She has, I thank the Gods! but whither wouldſt thou?

Leon. Having reſolv'd to viſit *Theodoſius*,
You ſwore you would not go without my Daughter,
Whereon I gave command that ſhe ſhould follow.

Vara. Yes, *Leontine*, my old Remembrancer,
Moſt learn'd of all Philoſophers, you did.

Leon. Thus long ſhe has attended, you have ſeen her,
Sounded her Vertues and her Imperfections;
Therefore, dread Sir, forgive this bolder Charge,
Which Honour ſounds, and now let me demand you——

Vara. Now help, *Aranthes*, or I am daſht for ever.

Aran. Whatever happens, Sir, diſdain the Marriage.

Leon. Can your high thoughts ſo far forget themſelves,
To admit this humble Virgin for your Bride?

Vara. Ha!

Athen. He bluſhes, Gods! and ſtammers at the queſtion.

Leon. Why do you walk, and chafe your ſelf, my Lord?
The buſineſs is not much.

Vara. How, *Leontine!*
Not much; I know that ſhe deſerves a Crown;
Yet 'tis to Reaſon much, tho' not to Love?
And ſure the World would bluſh to ſee the Daughter
Of a Philoſopher on the Throne of *Cyrus*.

Athen. Undone for ever!

Leon. Is this your anſwer, Sir?

Vara. Why doſt thou urge me thus, and puſh me to
The very brink of Glory? where, alas!
I look and tremble at the vaſt Deſcent:
Yet even there, to the vaſt bottom, down
My raſh Adventurer Love would have me leap,
And graſp my *Athenais* with my Ruine.

Leon. 'Tis well, my Lord——

Vara. Why doſt thou thus provoke me,
I thought that *Perſia*'s Court had ſtore of Honour
To ſatisfie the height of thy Ambition.
Beſides, old Man, my Love is too well grown,
To want a Tutor for his good Behaviour;
What he will do, he will do of himſelf,
And not be taught by you——

Leon. I know he will not!
Fond Tears away; I know, I know he will not;
But he would buy with his Old Man's Preferment,
My Daughter for your Whore.

Vara. Away, I say, my Soul disdains the Motion!

Leon. The Motion of a Marriage; yes, I see it;
Your angry looks and haughty words betray it:
I found it at the first; I thank you, Sir,
You have at last rewarded your old Tutor
For all his Cares, his Watchings, Services;
Yet, let me tell you, Sir, this humble Maid,
This Daughter of a poor Philosopher,
Shall, if she please, be seated on a Throne
As high as that of th' Immortal *Cyrus*.

Vara. I think that Age and deep Philosophy
Have crackt thy Brain: Farewel, old *Leontine*,
Retire to rest, and when this brawling Humour
Is rockt asleep, I'll meet my *Athenais*,
And clear the accounts of Love, which thou hast blotted.

Leon. Old *Leontine*! perhaps I am mad indeed,
But hold my Heart, and let that solid Vertue,
Which I so long ador'd, still keep the Reins.
O *Athenais*! But I will not chide thee,
Fate is in all our Actions, and, methinks,
At least a Father judges so; it has
Rebuk'd thee smartly for thy Easiness;
There is a kind of mournful Eloquence
In thy dumb grief, which shames all clamorous sorrow.

Athen. Alas! my Breast is full of Death; methinks
I fear ev'n you——

Leon. Why should'st thou fear thy Father?

Athen. Because you have the Figure of a Man!
Is there, O speak, a possibility
To be forgiven?

Leon. Thy Father does forgive thee,
And Honour will; but on this hard Condition,
Never to see him more——

Athen. See him! Oh Heavens!

Leon. Unless it be, my Daughter, to upbraid him:
Not tho' he should repent and straight return,
Nay proffer thee his Crown——No more of that.
Honour too cries revenge, revenge thy Wrongs,
Revenge thy self, revenge thy Injur'd Father.
For 'tis Revenge so wise, so glorious too,
As all the World shall praise——

Athen. O give me leave,

For yet I am all tenderneſs, the Woman,
The weak, the mild, the fond, the coward Woman,
Dares not look forth; but runs about my Breaſt,
And viſits all the warmer Manſions there,
Where ſhe ſo oft has harbour'd falſe *Varanes*.
Cruel *Varanes!* falſe forſworn *Varanes!*

Leon. Is this forgetting him? is this the Courſe
Which Honour bids thee take?

Athen. Ah, Sir, allow
A little time for Love to make his way;
Hardly he won the place, and many ſighs,
And many tears, and thouſand Oaths it coſt him.
And oh I find he will not be diſlodged
Without a Groan at parting hence for ever.
No, no! he vows he will not yet be raz'd
Without whole Floods of Grief at his farewel,
Which thus I ſacrifice! and oh I ſwear,
Had he proved true, I would as eaſily
Have empty'd all my Blood, and dy'd to ſerve him,
As now I ſhed theſe drops, or vent theſe ſighs,
To ſhew how well, how perfectly I lov'd him.

Leon. No Woman ſure, but thou, ſo low in Fortune,
Therefore the nobler is thy fair Example,
Would thus have griev'd, becauſe a Prince ador'd her;
Nor will it be believ'd in after-times,
That there was ever ſuch a Maid in being;
Yet do I adviſe, preſerve thy Vertue;
And ſince he does diſdain thee for his Bride,
Scorn thou to be——

Athen. Hold, Sir, oh hold, forbear.
For my nice Soul abhors the very ſound;
Yet with the ſhame of that, and the deſire
Of an Immortal Name, I am inſpir'd!
All kinder Thoughts are fled for ever from me,
All Tenderneſs, as if I ne'er had lov'd,
Has left my Boſom colder than the Grave.

Leon. On, *Athenais!* on, 'tis bright before thee,
Purſue the Track, and thou ſhalt be a Star.

Athen. O, *Leontine*, I ſwear, my noble Father,
That I will ſtarve e'er once forego my Vertue;
And thus let's joyn to contradict the World,
That Empire could not tempt a poor old Man,
To ſell his Prince the Honour of his Daughter;
And ſhe, too, match'd the Spirit of her Father;
Tho' humbly born, and yet more humbly bred;
She for her Fame refus'd a Royal Bed;

Who, tho' she lov'd, yet did put off the Hour,
Nor could her Vertue be betray'd by Pow'r.
" Patterns like these will guilty Courts improve,
" And teach the Fair to blush at Conscious Love:
" Then let all Maids for Honour come in view,
" If any Maid can more for Glory do.

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter Varanes *and* Aranthes.

Vara. COme to my Arms, my faithful, dear *Aranth*
Soft Counsellor, Companion of my Youth;
If I had longer been alone, most sure,
With the Distraction that surrounds my Heart,
My Hand would have rebelled against his Master,
And done a Murder here.

Aranth. The Gods forbid.

Vara. I swear, I press thee with as hearty Joy,
As ever fearful Bride embrac'd her Man,
When from a Dream of Death she wak'd and found
Her Lover safe, and sleeping by her side.

Aranth. The Cause, my Lord?

Vara. Early thou know'st last Night I went to rest;
But long, my Friend, e'er Slumber clos'd my Eyes;
Long was the Combat fought, 'twixt Love and Glory;
The Fever of my Passion burnt me up,
My Pangs grew stronger, and my Rack was doubled;
My Bed was all a-float with the cold drops
That mortal Pain wrang from my lab'ring Limbs;
My Groans more deep than others dying Gasps:
Therefore, I charge thee, haste to her Apartment;
I do conjure thee tell her, tell her all
My Fears can urge, or Fondness can invent:
Tell her how I repent, say any thing;
For any thing I'll do to quench my Fires:
Say, I will marry her now on the instant:
Say all that I would say; yet in the end
My Love shall make it more than Gods can utter.

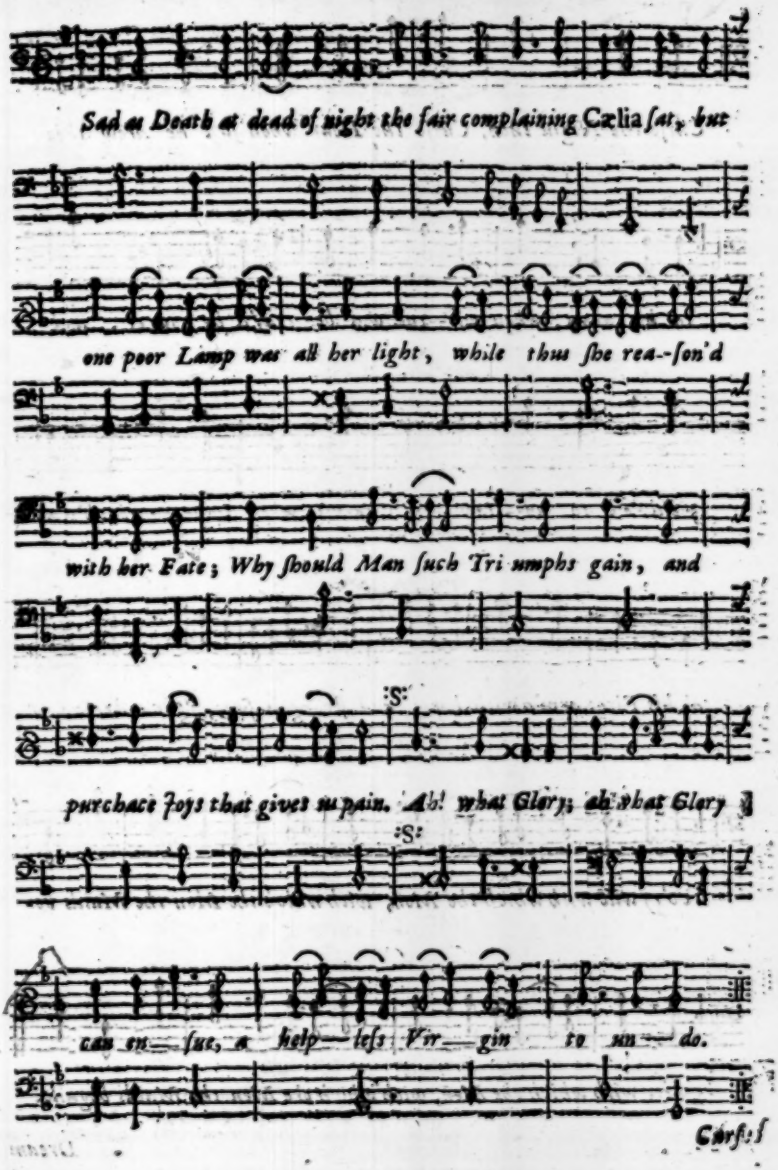
Aranth. My Lord! both *Leontine* and she are gone
From their Apartment——

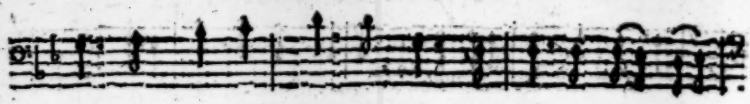
Vara. Ha! gone, sayst thou! whither?

Aranth. That was my whole Employment all this day:
But, Sir, I grieve to speak it, they have left

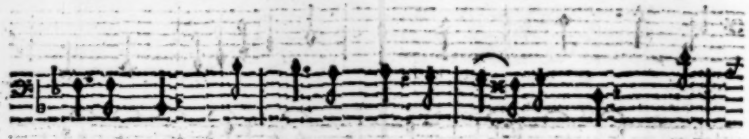
No

SONG after the Second ACT.

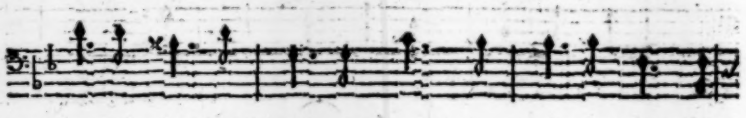




Curſe the Night then, Curſe the Hour when firſt he drew thee

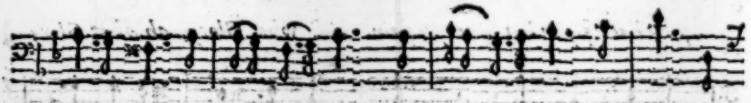


to his arms, when vir--tue was be-tray'd by pow'r, and

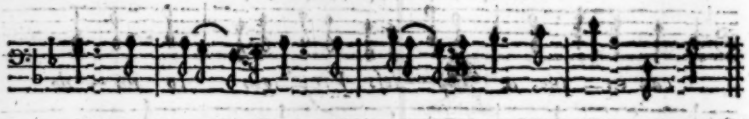


yield--ed to nn-- law---ful Charms, when Love approach'd with

all his Fires arm'd with hopes and ſtrong de-ſires, ſighs and tears, &



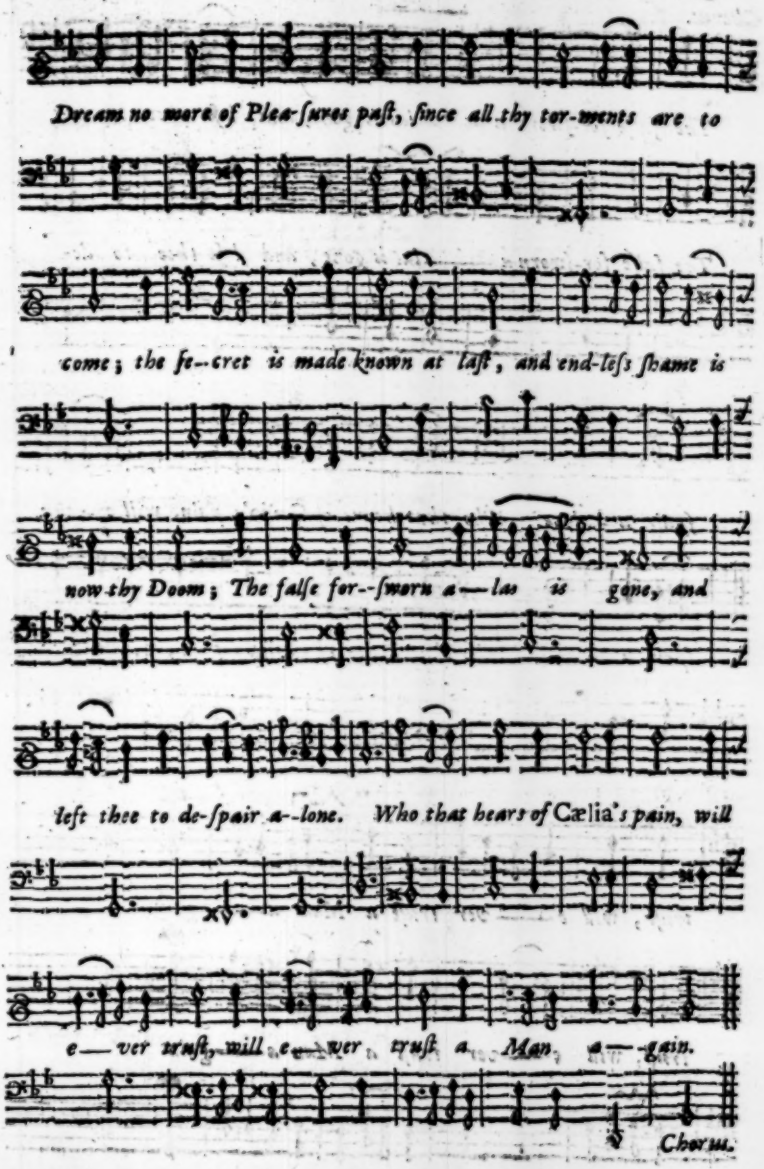
ev'ry wile with which the Men, with which the Men the Maids be-



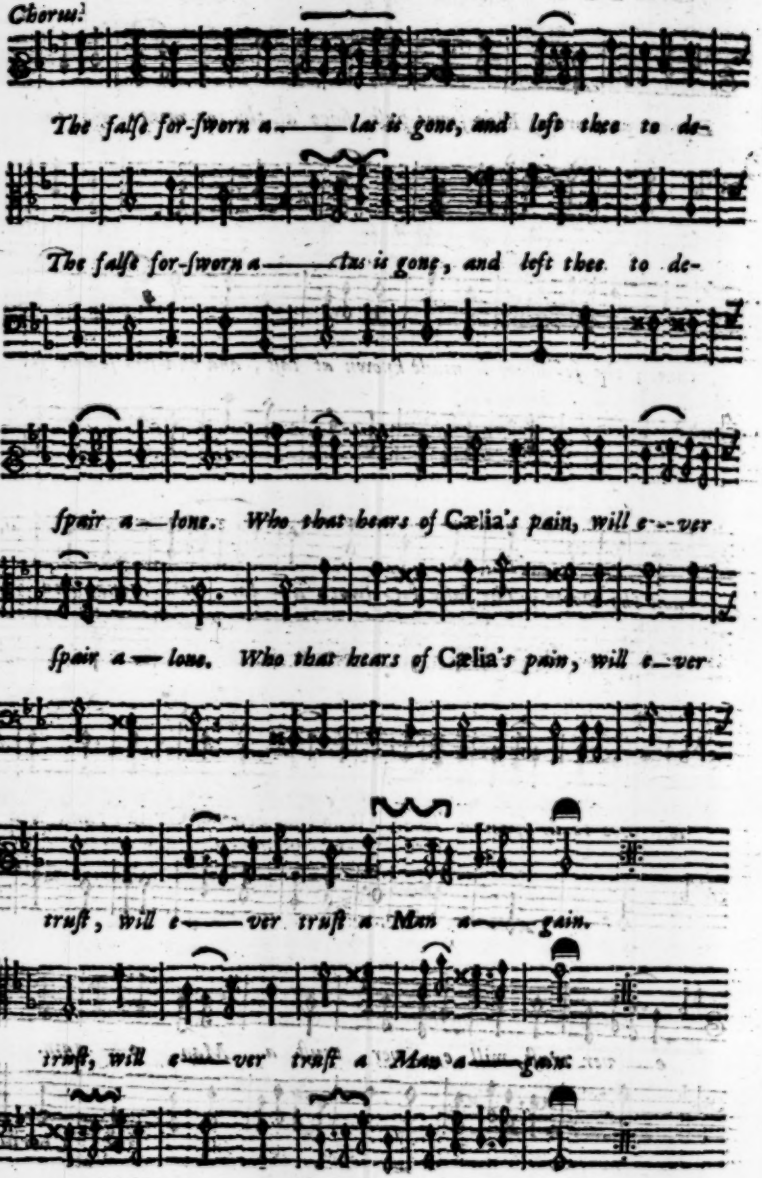
guile, with which the Men, with which the Men the Maids beguile.

Dream

SONG after the Second ACT.



Chorus.


The falſe for-ſworn a——las is gone, and left thee to de-
The falſe for-ſworn a——tus is gone, and left thee to de-
ſpair a—lone. Who that hears of Cælia's pain, will e—ver
ſpair a—lone. Who that hears of Cælia's pain, will e—ver
truſt, will e——ver truſt a Man a——gain.
truſt, will e——ver truſt a Man a——gain.

No track behind for Care to find 'em out;
Nor is it possible——
Vara. It is, it shall;
I'll struggle with impossibilities,
To find my *Athenais*: Not the Walls
Of *Athens*, nor of *Thebes*, shall hide her from me:
I'll bring the Force of all my Fathers Arms,
And lay 'em waste, but I'll redeem my Love.
O, *Leontine*! morose old *Leontine*,
Thou meer Philosopher! O cruel Sage,
Who for one hasty word, one Cholerick doubt,
Hast turn'd the Scale; though in the sacred Balance
My Life, my Glory, and my Empire hung.
Aranth. Most sure, my Lord, they are retir'd to *Athens*;
I will send Post to Night——
Vara. No, no, *Aranthes*,
Prepare my Chariots, for I'll go in Person;
I swear 'till now, 'till I began to fear
Some other might enjoy my *Athenais*,
I swear, I did not know how much I lov'd her;
But let's away, I'll to the Emperour,
Thou to the hasty management of my business;
Prepare, to day I'll go, to day I'll find her:
No more; I'll take my leave of *Theodosius*,
And meet thee on the *Hippodrome*: away,
Let the wild hurry of thy Masters Love,
Make quick thy apprehension: Haste, and leave me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Pulcheria, Atticus, Leontine, *Votaries leading* Athenais *in procession after her Baptism, to be confirm'd.*

Atticus Sings.

O, Chrysostom! *look down and see,*
An Off'ring worthy Heav'n and thee!
So rich the Victim, bright and fair,
That she on Earth appears a Star.
Chor. Eudosia *is the Virgin's Name,*
And after-times shall sing her Fame.

Atticus Sings. *Lead her, Votaries, lead her in,*
Her holy Birth does now begin.
1 Votary. *In humble Weeds, but clean Array,*
Your hours shall sweetly pass away;

——And

And, when the Rites Divine are paſt,
To pleaſant Gardens you ſhall haſte.

2 Votary. *Where many a flowry Bed we have,*
That Emblem ſtill to each a Grave:
And when within the Stream we look,
With Tears we uſe to ſwell the Brook:
But oh, when in the liquid Glaſs,
Our Heav'n appears, we ſigh to paſs!

Chor. *For Heav'n alone we are deſign'd,*
And all things bring our Heav'n to mind.

Athen. O Princes! O moſt worthy of the World, [*Kneels.*
That is ſubmitted by its Emperour,
To your moſt wiſe and providential ſway:
What *Greek* or *Roman* Eloquence can paint
The Rapture and Devotion of my Soul!
I am adopted yours; you are my Goddeſs,
That have new-form'd, new-moulded my Conceptions,
And by the plat-form of a Work Divine,
New-fram'd, new-built me to your own deſires;
Thrown all the Lumber of my Paſſions out,
And made my heart a Manſion of perfection;
Clean as an Anchorite's Grot, or Votary's Cell,
And ſpotleſs as the Glories of his ſteps
Whom we far off adore!

Pulch. Riſe, *Eudoſia*,
And let me fold my Chriſtian in my Arms,
With this dear pledge of an Eternal Love
I Seal thee, O *Eudoſia*! mine for ever.
Accept, bleſt Charge, the Vows of my Affection;
For by the ſacred Friendſhip that I give thee,
I think that Heav'n by Miracle did ſend thee,
To eaſe my Cares, to help me in my Councils,
To be my Siſter, partner in my Bed;
And equally, through my whole Courſe of Life,
To be the better part of thy *Pulcheria*,
And ſhare my Griefs and Joys.

Athen. No, Madam, no;
Excuſe the Cares that this ſad Wretch muſt bring you;
O rather let me leave the World for ever;
Or if I muſt partake your Royal ſecrets,
If you reſolve to load me with ſuch Honour,
Let it be far from Cities, far from Courts,
Where I may fly all human Converſation;
Where I may never ſee, nor hear, nor name,
Nor think, nor dream, O Heav'n! if poſſible,

Of

Of Mankind more.

Pulch. What now, in Tears, *Eudoſia*?

Athen. Far from the guilt of Palaces! O ſend me!
Drive me! O drive me from the Traytor Man:
So I might 'ſcape that Monſter, let me dwell
In Lyons haunts, or in ſome Tyger's Den;
Place me on ſome ſteep, craggy, ruin'd Rock,
That bellies out, juſt dropping in the Ocean;
Bury me in the hollow of its Womb;
Where, ſtarving on my cold and flinty Bed,
I may from far, with giddy apprehenſion,
See infinite Fathoms down the rumbling deep!
Yet not ev'n there, in that vaſt whirl of Death,
Can there be found ſo terrible a ruin,
As Man: falſe Man, ſmiling deſtructive Man.

Pulch. Then thou haſt lov'd, *Eudoſia*, or my Siſter;
Still nearer to my heart, ſo much the dearer;
Becauſe our Fates are like, and hand in hand
Our Fortunes lead us through the Maze of Life:
I am glad that thou haſt lov'd; nay, lov'd with Danger;
Since thou haſt 'ſcap'd the ruin——Methinks it lightens
The weight of my Calamities, that thou
(In all things elſe ſo perfect and Divine,)
Art yet a-kin to my Infirmity,
And bear'ſt thy part in Love's melodious ill:
Love that like bane perfum'd infects the mind,
That ſad delight that Charms all woman-kind.

Athen. Yes, Madam, I confeſs, that Love has charm'd me
But never ſhall again. No, I renounce him;
Inſpire me all the wrongs of abus'd Women,
All you that have been cozen'd by falſe Men:
See what a ſtrict Example I will make;
But for the Perjuries of one I will revenge ye
For all that's paſt, that's preſent, and to come.

Pulch. O thou far more than the moſt Maſculine Vertue!
Where our *Aſtræa*; where, O drowning brightneſs,
Where haſt thou been ſo long? Let me again
Proteſt my Admiration and my Love;
Let me declare aloud, while thou art here,
While ſuch clear Vertue ſhines within our Circle,
Vice ſhall no more appear within the Palace,
But hide her dazled Eyes, and this be call'd
The holy Court: But lo, the Emperour comes.

Enter Theodoſius, *and Attendants.*

Beauty, like thine, may drive that Form away

That

That has ſo long entranc'd his Soul——My Lord——

Theod. If yet, alas! I might but hope to ſee her;
But, oh forgive me Heav'n! this wilder ſtart,
That thus would reach impoſſibility:
No, no, I never muſt behold her more,
As well my *Atticus* might raiſe the Dead,
As *Leontine* ſhould charm that Form in view.

Pulch. My Lord, I come to give your grief a Cure,
With purer Flames to draw that cruel Fire
That tortur'd you ſo long——Behold this Virgin——
The Daughter of your Tutor *Leontine.*

Theo. Ha!

Pulch. She is your Siſters Charge, and made a Chriſtian,
And *Athenais* is *Eudoſia* now;
Be ſure a fairer never grac'd Religion,
And for her Vertue ſhe tranſcends Example.

Theod. O all ye bleſt above how can this be?
Am I awake, or is this poſſible? [Athen. *Kneels*

Pulch. She kneels, my Lord, will you not go and raiſe her?

Theod. Nay, do thou raiſe her, for I am rooted here;
Yet if laborious Love and Melancholy
Have not o'recome me, and quite turn'd me mad,
It muſt be ſhe! that naked dazling ſweetneſs:
The very Figure of that morning Star,
That dropping Pearls, and ſhedding dewy Beams,
Fled from the greedy Waves when I approach'd:
Anſwer me, *Leontine*, am I diſtracted?
Or is this true? by thee in all encounters
I will be rul'd, in Temperance and Wildneſs,
When Reaſon claſhes with extravagance;
But ſpeak——

Leon. 'Tis true, my Lord, this is my Daughter,
Whom I conceal'd in *Perſia* from all Eyes
But yours, when chance directed you that way.

Theo. He ſays, 'tis true: Why then this heartleſs Carriage?
O? were I proof againſt the Darts of Love,
And cold to Beauty as the Marble-Lover
That lies without a thought upon his Tomb;
Would not this glorious dawn of Life run through me,
And waken Death it ſelf——Why am I ſlow then?
What hinders now but in ſpight of Rules
I burſt through all the bands of Death that hold me, [*He kneels.*
And fly with ſuch a haſt to that Appearance,
As bury'd Saints ſhall make at the laſt Summons?

Athen. The Emperour at my Feet; O Sir! forgive me,

Drown

Drown me not thus with everlasting shame;
Both Heav'n and Earth must blush at such a view?
Nor can I bear it longer ——
Leon. My Lord, she is unworthy——
Theo. Ha! what say'st thou, *Leontine*!
Unworthy! O thou *Atheist* to perfection!
All that the blooming Earth could send forth fair;
All that the gawdy Heav'ns could drop down glorious!
Unworthy say'st thou! Wert thou not her Father,
I swear I would revenge——But hast, and tell me,
For love like mine will bear no second thought,
Can all the Honours of the Orient,
Thus sacrific'd with the most pure Affection,
With spotless thoughts and languishing desires,
Obtain, O *Leontine*, (the Crown at last)
To thee, I speak, thy Daughter to my Bride?
Leon. My Lord, the Honour bears such estimation,
It calls the Blood into my aged Cheeks,
And quite o'er-whelms my Daughter with Confusion;
Who with her Body prostrate on the Earth
Ought to adore you for the proffer'd Glory.
Theo. Let me embrace, and thank thee: O kind Heav'n!
O *Atticus*! *Pulcheria*! O my Father!
Was ever change like mine? Run through the Streets;
Who waits there? Run, and lowd as Fame can speak,
With Trumpet-sounds proclaim your Emperor's joy.
And as of old, on the great Festival
Of her they call the Mother of the Gods;
Let all work cease, at least an Oaken Garland
Crown each Plebeian Head: Let sprightly Bowls
Be doal'd about, and the toss'd Cymbals sound:
Tell 'em their much lamented *Theodosius*
By Miracle is brought from Death to Life:
His Melancholy's gone, and now once more
He shall appear at the State's Helm again;
Nor fear a Wrack while this bright Star direct us;
For while she shines, no Sands, no cowring Rocks
Shall lie unseen, but I will cut my way
Secure as *Neptune* through the highest stream,
And to the Port in safety steer the World.
Athen. Alas, my Lord, consider my Extraction,
With all my other Wants——
Theo. Peace, Empress, peace!
No more the Daughter of old *Leontine*.
A Christian now, and Partner of the East.
Athen. My Father has dispos'd me, you command me;

What can I anſwer then but my Obedience?

Theo. Attend her, dear *Pulcheria*; and, oh tell her,
To Morrow, if ſhe pleaſe, I will be happy. [*Ex.* Pulch. *and* Athen.
O why ſo long ſhould I my Joys delay?
Time imp thy Wings, let not thy Minutes ſtay,
But to a moment change the tedious day.
The day! 'twill be an Age before to Morrow:
An Age, a Death, a vaſt Eternity,
Where we ſhall cold, and paſt Enjoyment lie.

Enter Varanes *and* Aranthes.

Vara. O, *Theodoſius!*

Theo. Ha! my Brother here?
Why doſt thou come to make my Bliſs run o'er?
What is there more to wiſh? Fortune can find
No flaw in ſuch a glut of happineſs,
To let one Miſery in——O, my *Varanes!*
Thou that of late didſt ſeem to walk on Clouds,
Now give a looſe, let go the ſlackned Reins,
Let us drive down the Precipice of Joy,
As if that all the Winds of Heav'n were for us.

Vara. My Lord, I am glad to find the Gale is turn'd,
And give you Joy of this auſpicious Fortune.
Plough on your way, with all your Streamers out:
With all your glorious Flags and Streamers ride
Triumphant on——And leave me to the Waves,
The Sands, the Winds, the Rocks, the ſure deſtruction
And ready Gulphs that gape to ſwallow me.

Theo. It was thy Hand that drew me from the Grave,
Who had been dead by this time to Ambition,
To Crowns, to Titles, and my ſlighted Greatneſs.
But ſtill as if each work of thine deſerv'd
The ſmile of Heav'n——thy *Theodoſius* met
With ſomething dearer than his Diadem,
With all that's worth a wiſh, that's worth a life;
I met with that which made me leave the world.

Vara. And I, O turn of Chance! O curſed Fortune!
Have loſt at once all that could make me happy.
O ye too partial Powers! But now no more
The Gods, my dear, my moſt lov'd *Theodoſius*,
Double all thoſe Joys that thou haſt met upon thee;
For ſure thou art moſt worthy, worthy more
Than *Jove* in all his Prodigality
Can e'er beſtow in Bleſſings on Mankind!
And oh, methinks, my Soul is ſtrangely mov'd,

Takes

Takes it the more unkindly of her Stars,
That thou and I cannot be bleſt together:
For I muſt leave thee, Friend! this night muſt leave thee,
To go in doubtful ſearch of what perhaps
I ne'er ſhall find: if ſo my cruel Fate
Has order'd it: Why then farewel for ever,
For I ſhall never, never ſee thee more.

Theo. How ſenſible my tender Soul is grown
Of what you utter! O my gallant Friend!
O Brother! O *Varanes!* Do not judge
By what I ſpeak? for Sighs will interrupt me;
Judge by my Tears, judge by theſe ſtrict Embraces,
And by my laſt Reſolve: Tho' I have met
With what in ſilence I ſo long ador'd,
Tho' in the Rapture of proteſting Joys,
I had ſet down to morrow for my Nuptials;
And *Atticus* to Night prepares the Temple.
Yet my *Varanes*, I will rob my Soul
Of all her Health, of my Imperial Bride,
And wander with thee in the ſearch of that
On which thy Life depends———

Vara. If this I ſuffer,
Conclude me then begotten of a Hind,
And bred in Wilds: No, *Theodoſius*, no;
I charge thee by our Friendſhip, and conjure thee
By all the Gods, to mention this no more:
Perhaps, dear Friend, I ſhall be ſooner here
Than you expect, or I my ſelf imagine:
What moſt I grieve, is that I cannot wait
To ſee your Nuptials: Yet my Soul is with you,
And all my Adorations to your Bride.

Theo. What, my *Varanes*, will you be ſo cruel
As not to ſee my Bride before you go?
Or are you angry at your Rival's Charms,
Who has already raviſht half my Heart,
That once was all your own?

Vara. You know I am diſorder'd!
My melancholy will not ſuit her bleſt Condition. [*Exit.* Theo.
And the Gods know, ſince thou, my *Athenais*,
Art fled from theſe ſick Eyes, all other Women
To my pall'd Soul ſeem like the Ghoſt of Beauty,
And haunt my memory with the loſs of thee.

Enter Athenais, Theodoſius *Leading her.*

Theo. Behold, my Lord, the occaſion of my Joy.

Vara. O ye immortal Gods! *Aranthes!* oh!
Look there, and wonder: Ha! is't poſſible?
Athen. My Lord, the Emperour ſays you are his Friend,
He charges me to uſe my Intereſt,
And beg of you to ſtay, at leaſt ſo long
As our Eſpouſals will be ſolemnizing;
I told him I was honour'd once to know you;
But that ſo ſlightly, as I could not warrant
The grant of any thing that I ſhould ask you——
Vara. O Heaven! and Earth! O *Athenais!* why,
VVhy doſt thou uſe me thus? Had I the VVorld,
Thou know'ſt it ſhould be thine.
Athen. I know not that——
But yet, to make ſure work, one half of it
Is mine already, Sir, without your giving.
My Lord, the Prince is obſtinate, his Glory
Scorns to be mov'd by the weak Breath of Woman;
He is all Heroe, bent for higher Game;
Therefore, 'tis nobler, Sir, to let him go:
If not for him, my Lord, yet for my ſelf,
I muſt intreat the Favour to retire. [*Exit.* Athen. &c.
Vara. Death! and Deſpair! Confuſion! Hell and Furies!
Theo. Heav'n guard thy Health, and ſtill preſerve thy Vertue,
VVhat ſhould this mean? I fear the Conſequence,
For 'tis too plain they know each other well.
Vara. Undone! *Aranthes!* loſt, undone for ever,
I ſee my Doom, I read it with broad Eyes,
As plain as if I ſaw the Book of Fate:
Yet I will muſter all my Spirits up,
Digeſt my Griefs, ſwallow the riſing Paſſions.
Yes, I will ſtand this Shock of all the Gods
VVell as I can, and ſtruggle for my Life.
Theo. You muſe, my Lord: and if you'll give me leave
To judge your thoughts, they ſeem employ'd at preſent
About my Bride: I gueſs you know her too.
Vara. His Bride! O Gods! give me a moments Patience!
I muſt confeſs the ſight of *Athenais*,
VVhere I ſo little did expect to ſee her,
So grac'd and ſo adorn'd, did raiſe my wonder;
But what exceeds all admiration, is
That you ſhould talk of making her your Bride;
'Tis ſuch a blind effect of monſtrous Fortune,
That tho' I well remember you affirm'd it,
I cannot yet believe——
Theo. Then now believe me:
By all the Pow'rs Divine, I will eſpouſe her.

Vara.

Vara. Ha! I ſhall leap the bounds, Come, come, my Lord.
By all theſe Pow'rs you nam'd, I ſay you muſt not.
Theo. I ſay, I will; and who ſhall bar my pleaſure?
Yet more, I ſpeak the Judgment of my Soul,
Weigh but with Fortune Merit in the Balance,
And *Athenais* loſes by the Marriage.
Vara. Relentleſs Fates! malicious cruel Pow'rs!
O for what Crime do you thus rack your Creature?
Sir, I muſt tell you this unkingly meanneſs
Suits the Profeſſion of an Anchorite well,
But in an Oriental Emperour
It gives offence; nor can you without Scandal,
Without the notion of a groveling Spirit,
Eſpouſe the Daughter of old *Leontine*,
Whoſe utmoſt Glory is to have been my Tutor.
Theo. He has ſo well acquitted that Employment,
Breeding you up to ſuch a gallant height
Of full perfection, and imperial greatneſs,
That ev'n for this reſpect, if for no other,
I will eſteem him worthy while I live.
Vara. My Lord, you'll pardon me a little Freedom?
For I muſt boldly urge in ſuch a Cauſe,
Who-ever flatters you, tho' ne'er ſo near
Related to your Blood, ſhould be ſuſpected.
Theo. If Friendſhip would admit a cold Suſpicion,
After what I have heard, and ſeen to day,
Of all Mankind I ſhould ſuſpect *Varanes*.
Vara. He has ſtung me to the Heart; my Groans will choke me,
Unleſs my ſtrugling Paſſion gets a vent.
Out with it then——I can no more diſſemble——
Yes, yes, my Lord, ſince you reduce me to
The laſt neceſſity, I muſt confeſs it;
I muſt avow my Flame for *Athenais*
I am all Fire! my Paſſion eats me up,
It grows incorporate with my fleſh and Blood!
My Pangs redouble, now they cleave my heart!
O *Athenais!* O *Eudoſia*——oh——
Though plain as day I ſee my own deſtruction,
Yet to my death, and oh, let all the Gods
Bear Witneſs! I ſwear I will adore thee.
Theo. Alas! *Varanes*. Which of us two the Heav'ns
Have mark'd for death is yet above the Stars;
But while we live let us preſerve our Friendſhip
Sacred and juſt, as we have ever done.
This only Mean in two ſuch hard Extreams
Remains for both: To morrow you ſhall ſee her,

With

With all advantage, in her own Apartment;
Take your own time, say all you can to gain her,
If you can win her, lead her into *Persia*;
If not, consent that I espouse her here.

Vara. Still worse and worse! O *Theodosius*! oh,
I cannot speak for sighs, my death is seal'd
By this last sweetness; had you been less good,
I might have hop'd; but now my Doom's at hand.
Go then, and take her, take her to the Temple:
The Gods too give you joy. O *Athenais*!
Why does thy Image mock my Foolish sorrow?
O *Theodosius*, do not see my Tears:
Away, and leave me! leave me to the Grave.

Theo. Farewel; let's leave the Issue to the Heav'ns,
I will prepare your way with all that Honour
Can urge in your behalf, tho' to my Ruine. [*Ex.* Theod.

Vara. O I could tear my Limbs, and eat my Flesh;
Fool that I was, fond, proud, vain-glorious Fool!
Damn'd be all Courts, and treble damn'd Ambition:
Blasted be thy remembrance! Curses on thee,
And plagues on plagues fall on those Fools that seek thee.

Aranth. Have comfort, Sir.

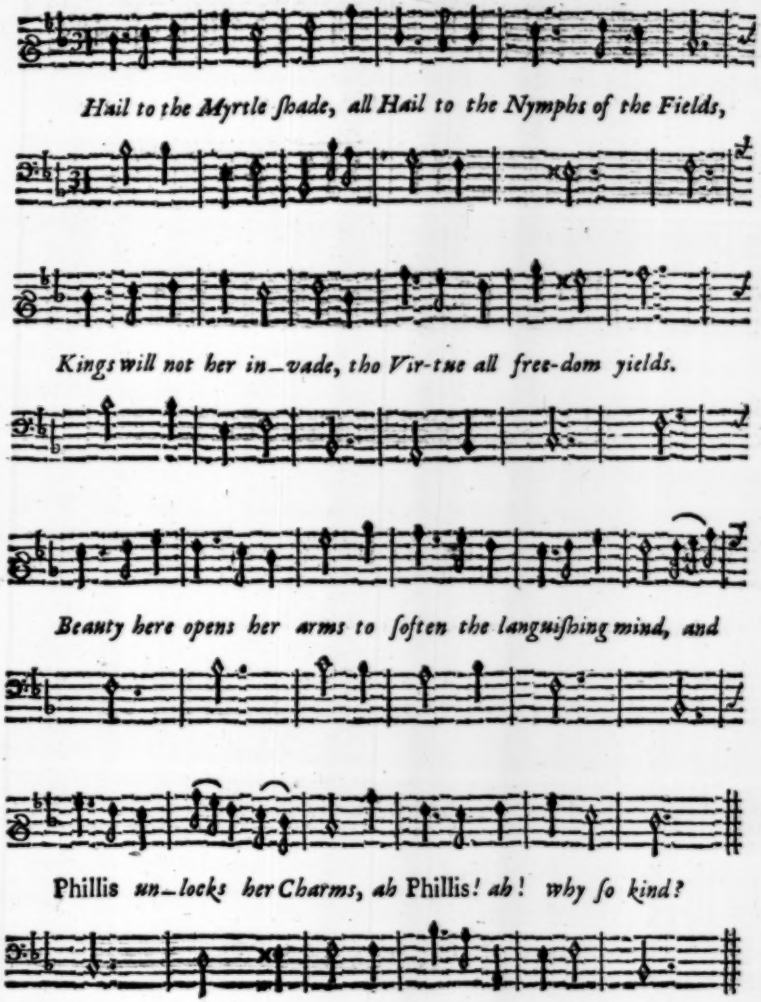
Vara. Away, and leave me, Villain, Traytor, who wrought me first to my destruction——
Yet stay and help me, help me to curse my pride,
Help me to wish that I had never been Royal,
That I had never heard the name of *Cyrus*,
That my first Brawl in Court had been my last.
O that I had been born some happy Swain,
And never known a life so great, so vain,
Where I extreams might not be forc'd to choose,
And blest with some mean Wife, no Crown could lose:
Where the dearer Partner of my little state
With all her smiling Off-spring at the Gate,
Blessing my Labours, might my coming wait.
Where in our humble Bed all safe might ly,
And not in curs'd Courts for Glory dy.—— [*Exeunt.*

SONG.

Hail to the Silvan Shade,
All hail to the Nymphs of the Fields;
Kings would not here invade
Those pleasures true virtue yields.

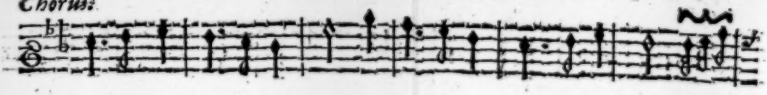
Chor.

SONG after the Third ACT.



Chorus.

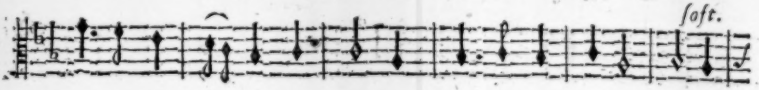
Chorus.



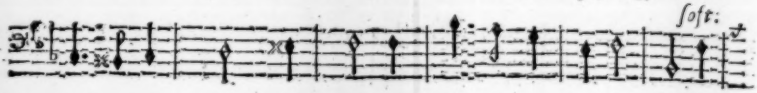
Beauty here opens her Arms to ſoften the languiſhing mind, and

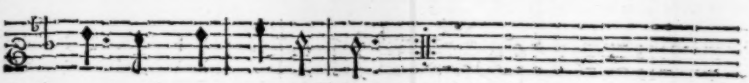
Beauty here opens her Arms to ſoften the languiſhing mind, and

Phillis *un locks her Charms; ah!* Phillis! *ah! why ſo kind? ah*

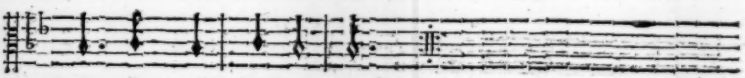


Phillis *un-locks her Charms; ah* Phillis! *ah! why ſo kind? ah*

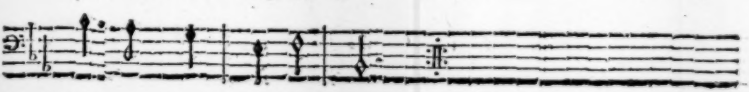




Phil-lis! *ah! why ſo kind?*



Phil-lis! *ah! why ſo kind?*



Chor. *Beauty here opens her Arms,*
To ſoften the languiſhing mind;
And Phillis *unlocks her Charms;*
Ah Phillis! *ah why ſo kind?*

2.

Phillis, *thou Soul of Love,*
Thou joy of the Neighb'ring Swains;
Phillis *that Crowns the Grove,*
And Phillis *that guilds the Plains.*
Chor. Phillis, *that ne'er had the skill,*
To paint, to patch, and be fine;
Yet Phillis *whoſe Eyes can kill,*
Whom Nature hath made Divine.

3.

Phillis, *whoſe charming Song,*
Makes labour and pains a delight;
Phillis *that makes the day young,*
And ſhortens the live-long night.
Chor. Phillis, *whoſe lips like* May,
Still laughs at the ſweets that they bring;
Where Love never knows decay,
But ſets with Eternal Spring.

ACT IV. SCENE II.

Enter Marcian, *and* Lucius *at a diſtance.*

Marc. THE General of the Oriental Armies,
Was a Commiſſion large as Fate could give:
'Tis gone: why what care I: O Fortune, Fortune!
Thou laughing Empreſs of this buſie World,
Marcian defies thee now——
Why what a thing is a diſcarded Favourite?
He who but now tho' longing to retire,
Cou'd not for buſie Waiters be alone,
Throng'd in his Chamber, haunted to his Cloſet
With a full Croud, and an Eternal Court;
When once the Favour of his Prince is turn'd,
Shun'd as a Ghoſt, the clouded Man appears;
And all the gaudy worſhippers forſake him;
So fares it now with me where-e'er I come,
As if I were another *Cataline.*
The Courtiers riſe, and no man will ſit near me,
As if the Plague were on me all men fly me:

O *Lucius! Lucius!* if thou leav'ſt me too,
I think, I ſwear I think I cou'd not bear it;
But, like a Slave, my Spirit broke with Suffering,
Should on theſe Coward Knees fall down and beg,
Once to be great again——

Luc. Forbid it, Heav'n!
That e'er the noble *Marcian* condeſcend
To ask of any, but the Immortal Gods;
Nay, I avow, if yet your Spirit dare,
Spight of the Court, you ſhall be great as *Cæſar.*

Mar. No, *Lucius*, no; the Gods repel that humour.
Yet ſince we are alone, and muſt ere long
Leave this bad Court; let us, like Veterans,
Speak out——Thou ſaiſt, alas! as great as *Cæſar*:
But where's his Greatneſs? Where is his ambition?
If any Sparks of Vertue yet remain
In this poor Figure of the *Roman* Glory;
I ſay, if any be, how dim they ſhine,
Compar'd with what his great Fore-Fathers were?
How ſhould he lighten then, or awe the World,
Whoſe Soul in Courts is but a Lambent-fire,
And ſcarce, O *Rome!* a Glow-worm in the Field:
Soft, Young, Religious, God-like qualities,
For one that ſhould recover the loſt Empire:
And wade through Seas of Blood, and walk o'er Mountains
Of ſlaughter'd Bodies to immortal Honour.

Luc. Poor heart! he pin'd a-while ago for Love.

Marc. And for his Miſtreſs vow'd to leave the World;
But ſome new chance it ſeems has chang'd his Mind.
A Marriage! but to whom or whence ſhe came,
None knows: but yet a Marriage is proclaim'd,
Pageants prepar'd; the Arches are adorn'd;
The Statues Crown'd; the *Hippodrome* does groan
Beneath the Burden of the mounted Warriors;
The Theatre is open'd too, where he
And the hot *Perſian* mean to act their Follies.
Gods! Gods! Is this the Image of our *Cæſars?*
Is this the Model of our *Romulus?*
O why ſo poorly have you ſtampt *Rome*'s glory!
Not *Rome*'s but yours! is this Man fit to bear it?
This waxen Portraicture of Majeſty!
Which every warmer Paſſion does melt down,
And makes him fonder than a Woman's longing?

Luc. Thus much I know to the eternal ſhame
Of the Imperial Blood; this upſtart Empreſs,
This fine new Queen is ſprung from abject Parents;

Nay, baſely born! but that's all one to him,
He likes and loves, and therefore marries her.
Marc. Shall I not ſpeak? Shall I not tell him of it?
I feel this big-ſwollen throbbing *Roman* Spirit
Will burſt, unleſs I utter what I ought.

Enter Pulcheria *with a Paper in her hand, and* Julia.

Marc. Pulcheria here! why ſhe's the Scourge of *Marcian*;
I tremble too when ever ſhe approaches,
And my Heart dances an unuſual meaſure;
Spite of my ſelf I bluſh and cannot ſtir
While ſhe is here——What, *Lucius*, can this mean?
'Tis ſaid *Calphurnia* had the heart of *Cæſar*:
Auguſtus doted on the ſubtle *Livia*:
Why then ſhould I not worſhip that fair Anger?
Oh didſt thou mark her when her Fury lightned,
She ſeem'd all Goddeſs; nay, her Frowns became her,
There was a Beauty in her very Wildneſs.
Were I a Man born great as our firſt Founder,
Sprung from the Blood Divine: But I am caſt
Beyond all poſſibility of Hope.
Pulch. Come hither, *Marcian!* read this Paper o'er,
And mark the ſtrange neglect of *Theodoſius*:
He ſigns what-e'er I bring; perhaps you have heard
To morrow he intends to wed a Maid of *Athens*,
New-made a Chriſtian, and new-nam'd *Eudoſia*;
VVhom he more dearly prizes than his Empire:
Yet in this Paper he hath ſet his Hand,
And ſeal'd it too with th'Imperial Signet,
That ſhe ſhould loſe her Head to morrow morning.
Marc. 'Tis not for me to judge; yet this ſeems ſtrange——
Pulch. I know he rather would commit a murder
On his own Perſon, than permit a Vein
Of her to bleed; yet, *Marcian*, what might follow,
If I were envious of this Virgins Honour,
By his raſh paſſing whatſoever I offer——
VVithout a view——ha, but I had forgot!
Julia, let's haſte from this infectious Perſon——
I had forgot that *Marcian* was a Traytor;
Yet by the Pow'rs Divine, I ſwear 'tis pity,
That one ſo form'd by Nature for all Honour,
All Titles, Greatneſs, Dignities Imperial,
The nobleſt Perſon, and the braveſt Courage,
Should not be honeſt: *Julia*, is't not pity?——
O *Marcian*, *Marcian!* I could weep to think
Vertue ſhould loſe it ſelf as thine has done.

Repent, rash Man, if yet 'tis not too late,
And mend thy Errors; so farewel for ever. [*Ex.* Pulch. Jul.

Marc. Farewel for ever! no, Madam, ere I go,
I am resolv'd to speak, and you shall hear me:
Then, if you please, take off this Traytor's Head?
End my Commission and my Life together.

Luc. Perhaps you'll laugh at what I am going to say;
But by your Life, my Lord, I think 'tis true:
Pulcheria loves this Traytor! Did you mark her?
At first she had forgot your Banishment;
Makes you her Counsellor, and tells her Secrets,
As to a Friend; nay, leaves them in your Hand,
And says, 'tis pity that you are not honest,
With such Description of your Gallantry,
As none but Love could make: Then taking leave,
Through the dark Lashes of her darting Eyes,
Methought she shot her Soul at every Glance;
Still looking back, as if she had a mind
That you should know she left her Heart behind her.

Marc. Alas! thou dost not know her, nor do I!
Nor can the Wit of all Mankind conceive her;
But let's away. This Paper is of use.

Luc. I guess your purpose;
He is a Boy, and as a Boy you'll use him.
There is no other way.

Marc. Yes, if he be not
Quite dead with sleep, for ever lost to Honour,
Marcian with this shall rouze him. O, my *Lucius!*
Methinks the Ghosts of the great *Theodosius*,
And thundering *Constantine* appear before me:
They charge me as a Soldier to chastise him,
To lash him with keen words from lazy Love,
And shew him how they trod the paths of honour. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.

Theodosius *lying on a Couch, with two Boys dress't like* Cupids *singing to him as he sleeps.*

SONG.

Happy day! ah happy day,
That Cæsar's *Beams did first display,*
So peaceful was the happy day.
The Gods themselves did all look down,
The Royal Infant's Birth to Crown,
So pleas'd, they scarce did on the guilty frown.

Happy

Happy day! ah happy day!
And oh thrice happy hour,
That made ſuch Goodneſs Maſter of ſuch Pow'r.
For thus the Gods declare to Men,
No day like this ſhall ever come agen.

Enter Marcian *with an Order.*

Theo. Ha! what raſh thing art thou, who ſet'ſt ſo ſmall
A value on thy Life, thus to preſume
Againſt the fatal Orders I have given,
Thus to entrench on *Cæſar*'s ſolitude,
And urge me to thy ruine?

Marc. Mighty *Cæſar*,
I have tranſgreſt, and for my Pardon bow
To thee, as to the Gods when I offend:
Nor can I doubt your Mercy, when you know
The nature of my Crime. I am Commiſſion'd
From all the Earth to give thee thanks and praiſes,
Thou Darling of Mankind! whoſe Conqu'ring Arms
Already drown the Glory of great *Julius*,
Whoſe deeper reach in Laws and Policy,
Makes wiſe *Auguſtus* envy thee in Heav'n?
What mean the Fates by ſuch prodigious Vertue?
When ſcarce the manly Down yet ſhades thy Face,
With Conqueſt thus to over-run the World,
And make Barbarians tremble? O, ye Gods!
Should Deſtiny now end thee in the Bloom,
Methinks I ſee thee mourn'd above the loſs
Of lov'd *Germanicus*, thy Funerals
Like his, are ſolemniz'd with Tears and Blood.

Theo. How, *Marcian*!

Marc. Yes, the raging Multitude,
Like Torrents, ſet no bound to their mad grief;
Shave their Wives Heads, and tear off their own Hair;
With wild Deſpair they bring their Infants out,
To brawl their Parents ſorrow in the Streets;
Trade is no more, all Courts of Juſtice ſtopt;
With Stones they daſh the Windows of their Temples,
Pull down their Altars; break their Houſhold Gods;
And ſtill the Univerſal Groan is this,
Conſtantinople's loſt, our Empire's ruin'd:
Since he is gone, that Father of his Country;
Since he is dead, O Life, where is thy Pleaſure?
O *Rome*! Oh conquer'd World, where is thy Glory?

Theo. I know thee well, thy Cuſtom and thy Manners;

Thou doſt upbraid me; but no more of this,
Not for thy Life——

Marc. What's Life without my Honour?
Could you transform your ſelf into a Gorgon,
Or make that beardleſs Face like *Jupiter's*,
I would be heard in ſpight of all your Thunder:
O pow'r of Guilt, you fear to ſtand the Teſt
Which Vertue brings; like Sores your Vices ſhake
Before this *Roman*-healer. But, by the Gods,
Before I go I'll rip the Malady,
And let the Venom flow before your Eyes.
This is a Debt to the great *Theodoſius*,
The Grand-father of your Illuſtrious Blood;
And then farewell for ever.

Theo. Preſuming *Marcian!*
What canſt thou urge againſt my Innocence?
Through the whole Courſe of all my harmleſs Youth,
Ev'n to this hour, I cannot call to mind
One wicked act which I have done to ſhame me.

Marc. This may be true: yet if you give the ſway
To other Hands, and your poor Subjects ſuffer,
Your negligence to them is as the Cauſe.
O *Theodoſius* credit me, who know
The World, and hear how Soldiers cenſure Kings;
In after-times, if thus you ſhould go on,
Your Memory by Warriers will be ſcorn'd,
As much as *Nero* or *Caligula* loath'd;
They will deſpiſe your ſloth, and backward eaſe,
More than they hate the others Cruelty.
And what a thing, ye Gods, is ſcorn or pity?
Heap on me, Heav'n, the hate of all Mankind;
Load me with Malice, Envy, Deteſtation:
Let me be horrid to all apprehenſion,
And the World ſhun me, ſo I eſcape but Scorn.

Theo. Prithee, no more!

Marc. Nay, when the Legions make Compariſons;
And ſay, thus cruel *Nero* once reſolv'd
On *Galba's* Inſurrection, for Revenge,
To give all *France* as Plunder to the Arms,
To poiſon the whole Senate at a Feaſt;
To burn the City, turn the wild Beaſts out;
Bears, Lions, Tigers, on the Multitude;
That ſo obſtructing thoſe that quench'd the Fire,
He might at once deſtroy Rebellious *Rome*.

Theo. O cruelty! why tell'ſt thou me of this?
Am I of ſuch a barbarous bloody temper?

Marc.

Marc. Yet ſome will ſay, this ſhew'd he had a ſpirit,
However fierce, avenging, and pernicious,
That ſavour'd of a *Roman*; but for you,
What can your partial Sycophants invent,
To make you room among the Emperours?
Whoſe utmoſt is the ſmalleſt part of *Nero*;
A pretty Player, one that can act a *Heroe*,
And never be one. O ye immortal Gods,
Is this the old *Cæſarian* Majeſty?
Now, in the name of our great *Romulus*,
Why ſing you not, and fiddle too as he did?
Why have you not, like *Nero*, a *Phenaſcus*?
One to take care of your Cœleſtial Voice?
Lie on your Back, my Lord, and on your Stomach
Lay a thin Plate of Lead, abſtain from Fruits;
And when the Buſineſs of the Stage is done,
Retire with your looſe Friends, to coſtly Banquets,
While the lean Army groans upon the Ground.

Theo. Leave me, I ſay, leſt I chaſtiſe thee:
Hence, be gone, I ſay——

Marc. Not till you have heard me out——
Build too, like him, a Palace lin'd with Gold,
As long and large as that to the Eſquiline:
Incloſe a Pool too in it, like the Sea,
And at the Empires coſt let Navies meet:
Adorn your ſtarry Chambers too with Gems,
Contrive the plated Ceilings to turn round,
With Pipes to caſt Ambroſian Oils upon you:
Conſume with his prodigious Vanity,
In meer Perfumes and Odorous Diſtillations,
Of Siſterces at once 400 Millions,
Let naked Virgins wait you at your Table,
And wanton Cupids dance and clap their Wings,
No matter what becomes of the poor Soldier;
So they perform the Drudgery they are fit for;
Why let 'em ſtarve for want of their Arrears,
Drop as they go, and lie like Dogs in Ditches.

Theo. Come, you are a Traytor!

Marc. Go too, you are a Boy——
Or by the Gods——

Theo. If Arrogance, like this,
And to the Emperour's Face, ſhould 'ſcape unpuniſh'd,
I'll write my ſelf a Coward; die then, Villain,
A Death too glorious for ſo bad a Man,
By *Theodoſius*'s hand. [Marcian *diſarms him, but is wounded.*

Marc. Now, Sir, where are you?

What

What, in the name of all our *Roman* Spirits,
Now charms my Hand from giving thee thy Fate?
Has he not cut me off from all my Honours?
Torn my Commiſſions, ſham'd me to the Earth,
Baniſht the Court, a Vagabond for ever?
Does not the Soldier hourly ask it from me?
Sigh their own wrongs, and beg me to revenge 'em?
What hinders now, but that I mount the Throne?
And make to that this purple Youth my Footſtool?
The Armies court me, and my Countries Cauſe:
The Injuries of *Rome* and *Greece* perſwade me.
Shew but this *Roman* Blood which he has drawn,
They'll make me Emperour whether I will or no:
Did not for leſs than this the latter *Brutus*,
Becauſe he thought *Rome* wrong'd, in Perſon, head,
Againſt his Friend, a black Conſpiracy?
And ſtab the Majeſty of all the World?

Theo. Act as you pleaſe, I am within your Power.

Marc. Did not the former *Brutus*, for the Crime
Of *Sextus*, drive old *Tarquin* from his Kingdom?
And ſhall this Prince too, by permitting others
To act their wicked Wills and lawleſs Pleaſures,
Raviſh from the Empire its dear Health,
Well-being, Happineſs, and ancient Glory,
Go on in this diſhonourable reſt?
Shall he, I ſay, dream on, while the ſtarv'd Troops
Lie cold and waking in the Winter Camp;
And like pin'd Birds, for want of ſuſtenance,
Feed on the Haws and Berries of the Fields!
O temper! temper me! ye gracious Gods!
Give to my Hand forbearance, to my Heart
Its conſtant Loyalty! I would but ſhake him,
Rouze him a little from this death of Honour,
And ſhew him what he ſhould be.

Theo. You accuſe me,
As if I were ſome Monſter, moſt unheard of:
Firſt, as the Ruin of the Army, then
Of taking your Commiſſion: But, by Heav'n,
I ſwear, O *Marcian*! this I never did,
Nor ere intended it: Nor ſay I this
To alter thy ſtern uſage; for with what
Thou haſt ſaid, and done, and brought to my remembrance,
I grow already weary of my life,

Marc. My Lord, I take your word: you do not know
The wounds which rage within your Country's Bowels:
The horrid uſage of the ſuff'ring Soldier:

But why will not our *Theodoſius* know,
If you intruſt the Government to others
That act theſe Crimes; who but your ſelfs to blame?
Be witneſs, ye Gods! of my plain dealing,
Of *Marcian*'s honeſty, how-e'er degraded:
I thank you for my baniſhment! but alas!
My loſs is little to what ſoon will follow;
Reflect but on your ſelf and your own Joys:
Let not this Lethargy for ever hold you!
'Twas rumour'd through the City that you lov'd:
That your Eſpouſals ſhould be ſolemniz'd;
When on a ſudden here you ſend your Orders
That this bright Favourite, the lov'd *Eudoſia*,
Should loſe her Head.

Theo. O Heav'n, and Earth! What ſay'ſt thou,
That I have ſeal'd the death of my *Eudoſia*?

Marc. 'Tis your own Hand and Signet: Yet I ſwear,
Tho' you have giv'n to Female hands your ſway,
And therefore I, as well as the whole Army,
For ever ought to curſe all Woman-kind;
Yet when the Virgin came, as ſhe was doom'd,
And on the Scaffold, for that purpoſe rais'd,
Without the walls appear'd before the Army!

Theo. What, on a Scaffold! ha, before the Army!

Marc. How quickly was the Tide of Fury turn'd!
To ſoft Compaſſion and relenting Tears: But when the Axe
Sever'd the brighteſt Beauty of the Earth
From that fair Body, had you heard the groan,
Which like a peal of diſtant Thunder, ran
Through all the armed Hoſt, you would have thought,
By the immediate Darkneſs that fell round us,
Whole Nature was concern'd at ſuch a Suff'ring,
And all the Gods were angry.

Theo. O *Pulcheria*!
Cruel ambitious Siſter, this muſt be
Thy doing. O ſupport me, noble *Marcian*!
Now, now's the time, if thou dar'ſt ſtrike; behold
I offer thee my Breaſt, with my laſt Breath,
I'll thank thee too, if now thou draw'ſt my Blood.
Were I to live, thy Councel ſhall direct me;
But 'tis too late——— [*He ſwoons.*

Marc. He faints! what, hoa there, *Lucius*! [*Enter* Lucius.
My Lord, the Emperour, *Eudoſia* lives;
She's here, or will be in a minute, moment,
Quick as a thought ſhe calls you to the Temple.
O *Lucius*, help—I have gone too far; but ſee,

He

He breaths again——*Eudoſia* has awak'd him.

Theo. Did you not name *Eudoſia*?

Marc. Yes, ſhe lives;
I did but feign the ſtory of her Death,
To find how near you plac'd her to your Heart:
And may the Gods rain all their Plagues upon me,
If ever I rebuke you thus again:
Yet 'tis moſt certain, that you ſign'd her death,
Not knowing what the wiſe *Pulcheria* offer'd,
Who left it in my Hand to ſtartle you:
But by my Life and Fame, I did not think
It would have toucht your Life. O pardon me,
Dear Prince, my Lord, my Emp'rour! Royal Maſter!
Droop not becauſe I utter'd ſome raſh words,
And was a mad Man——by th'immortal Gods!
I love you as my Soul: what e'er I ſaid,
My thoughts were otherwiſe; believe theſe Tears
Which do not uſe to flow; all ſhall be well:
I ſwear that there are Seeds in that ſweet Temper,
To attone for all the Crimes in this bad Age.

Theo. I thank thee firſt for my *Eudoſia*'s Life.
What, but my Love, could have call'd back that Life
Which thou haſt made me hate? But oh, methought
'Twas hard, dear *Marcian*, very hard from thee,
From him I ever reverenc'd as my Father,
To hear ſo harſh a Meſſage——but no more:
We are Friends: Thy hand; Nay, if thou wilt not riſe,
And let me fold my Arms about thy Neck,
I'll not believe thy Love! In this forgive me.
Firſt let me wed *Eudoſia*, and we'll out;
We will, my General, and make amends
For all that's paſt: Glory and Arms ye call,
And *Marcian* leads me on——

Marc. Let her not reſt then,
Eſpouſe her ſtraight; I'll ſtrike you at a heat;
May this great humour get large growth within you,
And be encourag'd by the emboldning Gods,
O what a ſight will this be to the Soldier,
To ſee me bring you dreſt in ſhining Armour,
To head the ſhouting Squadrons——O ye Gods!
Methinks I hear the echoing Cries of Joy;
The ſound of Trumpets, and the beat of Drums.
I ſee each ſtarving Soldier bound from Earth,
As if ſome God by Miracle had rais'd him,
And with beholding you grow fat again.
Nothing but gazing Eyes, and opening Mouths;

Cheeks

Cheeks red with Joy, and lifted Hands about you:
Some wiping the glad Tears that trickle down
With broken *Io*'s, and with ſobbing Raptures,
Crying to Arms: He's come! our Emp'rour's come
To win the World. Why is not this far better
Than lolling in a Lady's lap, and ſleeping,
Faſting, or praying? Come, come, you ſhall be merry:
And for *Eudoſia*, ſhe is yours already:
Marcian has ſaid it, Sir, ſhe ſhall be yours.

Theo. O *Marcian!* oh my Brother! Father! all:
Thou beſt of Friends, moſt faithful Counſellor,
I'll find a Match for thee too e'er I reſt,
To make thee love me. For when thou art with me
I'm ſtrong and well; but when thou art gone, I am nothing.

Enter Athenais, *meeting* Theodoſius.

Theo. Alas! *Eudoſia*, tell me what to ſay;
For my full Heart can ſcarce bring forth a word
Of that which I have ſworn to ſee perform'd.

Athen. I am perfectly obedient to your pleaſure.

Theo. Well, then I come to tell thee, that *Varanes*
Of all mankind is neareſt to my Heart;
I love him, dear *Eudoſia*; and to prove
That Love on trial, all my Blood's too little;
Ev'n thee, if I were ſure to die this moment,
(As Heav'n alone can tell how far my Fate
Is off!) O thou my Soul's moſt tender Joy,
With my laſt Breath I would bequeath him thee.

Athen. Then you are pleas'd, my Lord, to yield me to him.

Theo. No, my *Eudoſia*; no, I will not yield thee,
While I have Life; for Worlds I will not yield thee:
Yet, thus far I am engag'd to let thee know,
He loves thee, *Athenais*, more than ever.
He languiſhes, deſpairs, and dies like me;
And I have paſt my word that he ſhall ſee thee.

Athen. Ah, Sir, what have you done againſt your ſelf,
And me? Why have you paſt your fatal word?
Why will you truſt me, who am now afraid
To truſt my ſelf? Why do you leave me naked
To an aſſault, who had made proof my Vertue,
With this ſure Guard, never to ſee him more.
For, oh with trembling Agonies I ſpeak it,
I cannot ſee a Prince, whom once I lov'd,
Bath'd in his Grief, and gaſping at my Feet,
In all the violent Trances of Deſpair,
Without a ſorrow, that perhaps may end me.

Theo. O ye ſeverer Pow'rs! too cruel Fate!
Did ever Love tread ſuch a maze before?
Yet, *Athenais*, ſtill I truſt thy Vertue;
But if thy bleeding Heart cannot refrain,
Give, give thy ſelf away; yet ſtill remember,
That moment *Theodoſius* is no more.——
[*Ex.* Theo. *with* Attic. Pulc. Leon.

Athen. Now glory! now, if ever thou didſt work
In Woman's Mind, aſſiſt me——Oh my Heart,
Why doſt thou throb, as if thou wer't a breaking?
Down, down, I ſay, think on thy Injuries,
Thy wrongs! thy wrongs. 'Tis well my Eyes are dry,
And all within my Boſom now is ſtill.

Enter Varanes, *leaning on* Aranthes.

Ha! is this he! or is't *Varanes* Ghoſt?
He looks as if he had beſpoke his Grave,
Trembling and pale; I muſt not dare to view him;
For oh I feel his melancholy here,
And fear I ſhall too ſoon partake his ſickneſs!

Vara. Thus to the angry Gods offending Mortals,
Made ſenſible by ſome ſevere Affliction,
How all their Crimes are regiſtred in Heav'n,
In that nice Court, how no raſh word eſcapes,
But ev'n extravagant Thoughts are all ſet down:
Thus the poor penitents with Fear approach
The Reverend Shrines, and thus for Mercy bow; [*Kneels.*
Thus melting too, they waſh the hallowed Earth,
And groan to be forgiven——
O Empreſs! O *Eudoſia!* ſuch you are now,
Theſe are your Titles, and I muſt not dare
Ever to call you *Athenais* more.

Athen. Riſe, riſe, my Lord, let me intreat you riſe,
I will not hear you in that humble Poſture:
Riſe, or I muſt withdraw—— The World will bluſh
For you and me, ſhould it behold a Prince,
Sprung from Immortal *Cyrus*, on his Knees
Before the Daughter of a poor Philoſopher.

Vara. 'Tis juſt, you righteous Gods! my Doom is juſt;
Nor will I ſtrive to deprecate her Anger.
If poſſible, I'll aggravate my Crimes,
That ſhe may rage till ſhe has broke my heart:
For all I now deſire, and let the Gods,
Thoſe cruel Gods that joyn to my undoing,
Be Witneſſes to this unnatural Wiſh,

Is to fall dead without a Wound before her.
Athen. O ye known ſounds! But I muſt ſteel my Soul.
Methinks theſe Robes, my *Delia*, are too heavy.
Vara. Not worth a word, a look, nor one regard!
Is then the Nature of my Fault ſo hainous,
That when I come to take my eternal leave,
You'll not vouchſafe to view me? This is ſcorn,
Which the fair Soul of gentle *Athenais*,
Wou'd ne'er have harbour'd———
O, for the ſake of him, whom you ere-long
Shall hold as faſt as now your Wiſhes form him,
Give me a patient hearing; for however
I talk of Death, and ſeem to loath my Life,
I would deliberate with my Fate a while,
With ſnatching Glances eye thee to the laſt;
Pauſe o'er a loſs like that of *Athenais*,
And parley with my ruine.
Athen. Speak, my Lord;
To hear you is the Emperor's Command;
And for that Cauſe I readily obey.
Vara. The Emperour, the Emperour's Command
And for that Cauſe ſhe readily obeys.
I thank you, Madam, that on any terms
You condeſcend to hear me———
Know then, *Eudoſia*. Ah, rather let me call thee
By the lov'd Name of *Athenais* ſtill;
That Name that I ſo often have invok'd!
And which was once auſpicious to my Vows;
So oft at Midnight ſigh'd amongſt the Groves,
The Rivers murmur and the Echo's burden,
Which every Bird could ſing, and Wind did bear!
By that dear Name, I make this Proteſtation,
By all that's good on Earth, or bleſt in Heav'n,
I ſwear I love thee more, far more than ever,
With conſcious Bluſhes too! Here, help me, Gods!
Help me to tell her, tho' to my Confuſion,
And everlaſting Shame; yet I muſt tell her,
I lay the *Perſian* Crown before her Feet.
Athen. My Lord, I thank you, and to expreſs thoſe thanks,
As nobly as you offer 'em, I return
The gift you make; nor will I now upbraid you
With the Example of the Emp'rour;
Not but I know 'tis that that draws you on,
Thus to deſcend beneath your Majeſty;
And ſwell the Daughter of a poor Philoſopher
With hopes of being great.

Vara. Ah, Madam! ah, you wrong me; by the Gods
I had repented e'er I knew the Emp'rour——
Athen. You find perhaps, too late, that *Athenais*,
However ſlighted for her Birth and Fortune,
Has ſomething in her Perſon, and her Vertue,
Worth the Regard of Emperours themſelves;
And, to return the Complement you gave
My Father, *Leontine*, that poor Philoſopher,
Whoſe utmoſt Glory is to have been your Tutor:
I here proteſt, by Vertue, and by Glory,
I ſwear by Heav'n and all the Pow'rs Divine,
The abandon'd Daughter of that poor old Man
Shall ne'er be ſeated on the Throne of *Cyrus*.
Vara. O Death to all my Hopes! what haſt thou ſworn?
To turn me wild! Ah curſed Throne of *Cyrus*,
Would thou hadſt been o'erturn'd and laid in Duſt,
His Crown too Thunder-ſtruck. My Father, all
The *Perſian* Race, like poor *Darius*, ruin'd,
Blotted, and ſwept for ever from the World;
When firſt Ambition blaſted thy Remembrance——
Athen. O Heav'n! I had forgot the baſe Affront
Offer'd by this proud Man! a Wrong ſo great,
It is remov'd beyond all hope of Mercy:
He had deſign'd to bribe my Father's Vertue,
And by unlawful means——
Fly from my ſight, leſt I become a Fury——
And break thoſe Rules of Temperance I propos'd;
Fly, fly, *Varanes!* fly this ſacred place
Where Vertue and Religion are profeſs'd:
This City will not harbour Infidels,
Traytors to Chaſtity, licentious Princes;
Be gone, I ſay, thou canſt not here be ſafe,
Fly to Imperial Libertines abroad;
In foreign Courts thou'lt find a thouſand Beauties
That will comply for Gold, for Gold they'll weep,
For Gold be fond as *Athenais* was;
And charm thee ſtill as if they lov'd indeed.
Thou'lt find enough Companions too for Riot:
Luxuriant all, and Royal as thy ſelf,
Tho' thy loud Vices ſhould reſound to Heav'n.
Art thou not gone yet?
Vara. No, I am charm'd to hear you:
O from my Soul I do confeſs my ſelf
The very blot of Honour; I am more black
Than thou, in all thy Heat of juſt Revenge,
With all thy glorious Eloquence, canſt make me.

Athen.

Athen. Away, *Varanes.*

Vara. Yes, Madam, I am going——
Nay, by the Gods, I do not ask thee pardon:
Nor while I live will I implore thy mercy:
But when I am dead, if as thou doſt return,
With happy *Theodoſius* from the Temple,
If as thou go'ſt in Triumph through the ſtreets,
Thou chance to meet the cold *Varanes* there,
Born by his Friends to his Eternal home;
Stop then, O *Athenais!* and behold me;
Say as thou hang'ſt about the Emp'rour's Neck,
Alas! my Lord, this ſight is worth our pity;
If to thoſe pitying words, thou add a Tear,
Or give one parting groan—If poſſible,
If the good Gods will grant my Soul the freedom,
I'll leave my Shrowd, and wake from Death to thank thee.

Athen. He ſhakes my reſolution from the Bottom:
My bleeding Heart too ſpeaks in his behalf,
And ſays my Vertue has been too ſevere.

Vara. Farewell! O Empreſs: No, *Athenais*, now
I will not call thee by that tender Name,
Since cold deſpair begins to freeze my Boſom,
And all my Pow'rs are now reſolv'd on Death.
'Tis ſaid, that from my Youth I have been raſh,
Cholerick, and hot, but let the Gods now judge
By my laſt wiſh, if ever patient Man
Did calmly bear ſo great a loſs as mine;
Since 'tis ſo doom'd, by Fate you muſt be wedded,
For your own Peace, when I am laid in Earth,
Forget that e're *Varanes* had a Being;
Turn all your Soul to *Theodoſius* Boſom:
Continue Gods their Days, and make 'em long:
Lucina wait upon their fruitful *Hymen*,
And many Children, beauteous as the Mother,
And pious as the Father, make 'em ſmile.

Athen. O Heav'ns!

Vara. Farewell——I'll trouble you no more:
The malady that's lodg'd within grows ſtronger;
I feel the ſhock of my approaching Fate:
My heart too trembles at his diſtant march;
Nor can I utter more, if you ſhoul'd ask me.
Thy arm, *Aranthes!* O farewell for ever——

Athen. *Varanes*, ſtay, and ere you go for ever,
Let me unfold my heart.

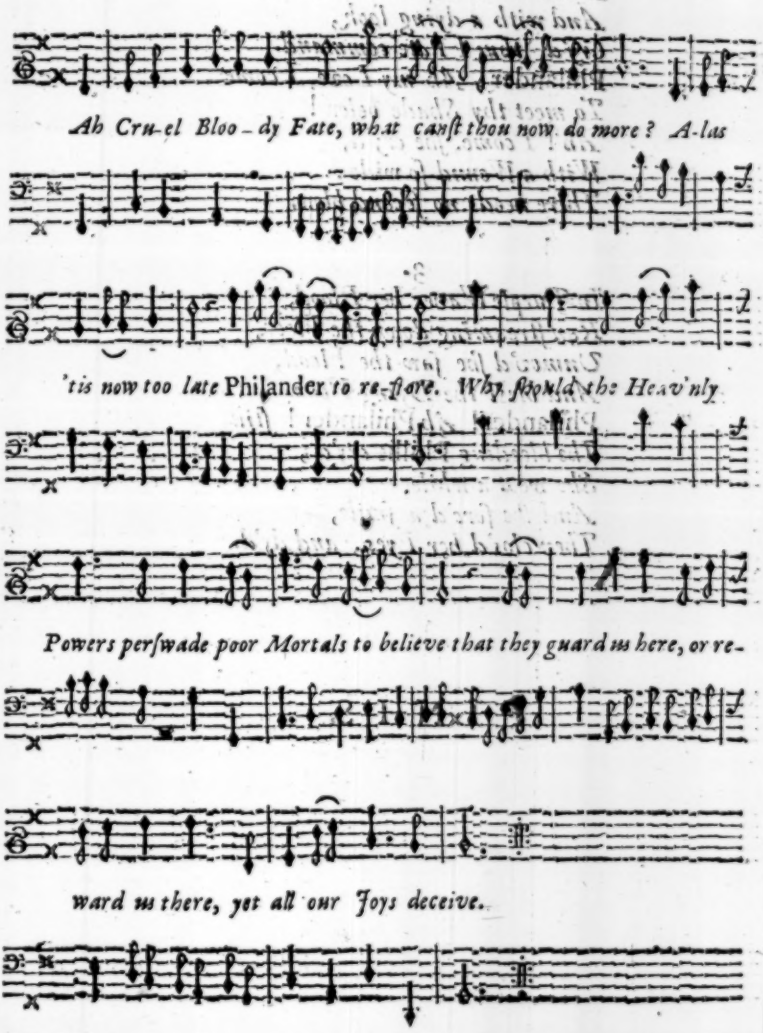
Vara. O *Athenais!*
What further cruelty haſt thou in ſtore

To

To add to what I ſuffer?
Athen. Since it is doom'd
That we muſt part, let's part as Lovers ſhou'd,
As thoſe that have lov'd long, and lov'd well.
Vara. Art thou ſo good! O *Athenais*, oh!
Athen. Firſt from my Soul I pity and forgive you;
I pardon you that haſty little Errour,
Which yet has been the cauſe of both our Ruins.
And let this ſorrow witneſs for my Heart,
How eagerly I wiſh it had not been,
And ſince I cannot keep it, take it all,
Take all the Love, O Prince, I ever bore you:
Or, if 'tis poſſible, I'll give you more;
Your noble Carriage forces this confeſſion:
I rage! I burn! I bleed! I die for Love:
I am diſtracted with this World of Paſſion.
Vara. Gods! cruel Gods! take notice I forgive you.
Athen. Alas! my Lord! my weaker tender Sex
Has not your manly Patience; cannot curb
This Fury in; therefore I let it looſe;
Spite of my rigid Duty, I will ſpeak
With all the dearneſs of a dying Lover,
Farewell moſt lovely, and moſt lov'd of Men;
Why comes this dying paleneſs o'er thy Face?
Why wander thus thy Eyes? Why doſt thou bend
As if the fatal weight of Death were on thee?
Vara. Speak yet a little more; For, by the Gods!
And as I prize thoſe bleſſed happy moments,
I ſwear, O *Athenais*! all is well!
O never better!
Athen. I doubt thee, dear *Varanes*;
Yet, if thou dy'ſt, I ſhall not long be from thee.
Once more farewell, and take theſe laſt Embraces,
Oh! I could cruſh him to my Heart! Farewel;
And as a dying pledge of my laſt Love,
Take this, which all thy Pray'rs could never Charm;
What have I done? oh lead me, lead me, *Delia*!—
Ah, Prince farewell! Angels protect and guard thee.
Vara. Turn back! O *Athenais*! and behold me!
Hear my laſt words, and then farewell for ever:
Thou haſt undone me more by this confeſſion:
You ſay, you ſwear, you love me more than ever;
Yet, I muſt ſee you marry'd to another:
Can there be any Plague or Hell like this?
O *Athenais*! Whither ſhall I turn me?
You have brought me back to life; but, oh, what life?

To

SONG after the Fourth ACT.



Her

2.

Her Ponyard then she took,
And held it in her Hand;
And with a dying look,
Cry'd, thus I Fate command.
Philander! *Ah my Love, I come*
To meet thy Shade below!
Ah! I come, she cry'd,
With a Wound so wide,
There needs no second blow.

3.

In Purple Waves her Blood,
Ran streaming down the Floor,
Unmov'd she saw the Flood,
And blest the Dying Hour.
Philander! *Ah,* Philander! *still*
The bleeding Phillis *cry'd;*
She wept a while,
And she forc'd a smile,
Then clos'd her Eyes, and dy'd.

FINIS.

To a life more terrible than a thouſand deaths;
Like one that had been buried in a Trance,
With racking ſtarts, he wakes and gazes round,
Forc'd by deſpair his whirling Limbs to wound,
And bellow like a Spirit under ground.
Still urg'd by Fate, to turn, to toſs, and rave,
Tormented, daſh'd, and broken in the Grave. [*Exeunt.*

ACT V. SCENE I.

Athenais *dreſt in Imperial Robes, and Crown'd: A Table with a Bowl of Poiſon.*

Athen. A Midnight Marriage! muſt I to the Temple
Thus, at the Murderers hour? 'Tis wond'rous ſtrange!
But ſo thou ſay'ſt my Father has commanded;
And that's Almighty Reaſon.
Delia. Th' Emperour in compaſſion to the Prince,
Who would, perhaps, fly to extravagance,
If he in publick ſhould reſolve to eſpouſe you,
Contriv'd by this cloſe Marriage to deceive him.
Athen. Go fetch thy Lute, and ſing thoſe Lines I gave thee;
So, now I am alone, yet my Soul ſhakes;
For where this dreadful Draught may carry me,
The Heav'ns can only tell; yet I am reſolv'd
To drink it off in ſpite of Conſequence,
Whiſper him, O ſome Angel! what I am doing;
By ſympathy of Soul let him too tremble,
To hear my wondrous Faith, my wondrous Love,
Whoſe Spirit not content with an Ovation,
Of ling'ring Fate, with Triumph thus reſolv'd:
Thus in the rapid Chariot of the Soul;
To mount and dare as never Woman dar'd:
'Tis done, haſte, *Delia*, haſte! come bring thy Lute, [*Drinks.*
And ſing my waftage to immortal Joys,
Methinks I cannot but ſmile at my own bravery,
Thus from my loweſt Fortune rais'd to Empire,
Crown'd and adorn'd! worſhipt by half the Earth,
While a young Monarch dies for my Embraces:
Yet now to wave the Glories of the World,
O my *Varanes*! tho' my Births unequal,
My Vertue ſure has richly recompenc'd,
And quite out-gone Example!

SONG.

2.

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And held it in her Hand;
And with a dying look,
Cry'd, thus I Fate command.
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To meet thy Shade below!
Ah! I come, she cry'd,
With a Wound so wide,
There needs no second blow.

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My Vertue ſure has richly recompenc'd,
And quite out-gone Example!

SONG.

SONG.

2.

Ah Cruel bloody Fate,
What canſt thou now do more?
Alas, 'tis all too late,
Philander *to reſtore:*
Why ſhould the Heavenly Powers perſwade
Poor Mortals to believe,
That they guard us here,
And reward us there,
Yet all our Joys deceive?

2.

Her Ponyard then ſhe took,
And held it in her Hand;
And with a dying look,
Cry'd, thus I Fate commmand:
Philander! *ah my Love I come,*
To meet thy ſhade below;
Ah, I come, ſhe cry'd,
With a Wound ſo wide,
There needs no ſecond Blow:

3.

In Purple Waves her Blood
Ran ſtreaming down the Floor,
Unmov'd ſhe ſaw the Flood,
And bleſt her dying hour:
Philander! *ah,* Philander! *ſtill*
The bleeding Phillis *cry'd,*
She wept a while,
And forc'd a ſmile;
Then clos'd her Eyes and dy'd.

Enter Pulcheria.

Pulch. How fares my dear *Eudoſia*? ha, thou look'ſt,
Or elſe the Tapers cheat my ſight, like one
That's fitter for thy Tomb than *Cæſar*'s Bed;
A fatal Sorrow dims thy ſhaded Eyes,
And in deſpite of all thy Ornaments,
Thou ſeem'ſt to me the Ghoſt of *Athenais.*

Athen. And what's the puniſhment, my dear *Pulcheria*?
What Torments are allotted thoſe ſad Spirits,
Who groaning with the burden of Deſpair;
No longer will endure the Cares of Life,
But boldly ſet themſelves at liberty,
Through the dark Caves of Death to wander on,

Like

Like wilded Travellers without a Guide,
Eternal Rovers in the gloomy Maze,
Where ſcarce the Twi-light of an Infant Moon,
By a faint Glimmer checkering through the Trees,
Reflects to diſmal view the walking Ghoſts,
And never hope to reach the bleſſed Fields?

Pulch. No more o' that, *Atticus* ſhall reſolve thee;
But ſee, he waits thee from the Emperour;
Thy Father too attends.

Enter Leontine, Atticus, *&c.*

Leont. Come, *Athenais!* Ha, what now in Tears?
O fall of Honour, but no more I charge thee,
I charge thee, as thou ever hop'ſt my Bleſſing,
Or fear'ſt my Curſe, to baniſh from thy Soul
All Thoughts, if poſſible, the Memory
Of that ungrateful Prince that has undone thee.
Attend me to the Temple on this Inſtant,
To make the Emperour thine, this Night to wed him,
And lie within his Arms.

Athen. Yes, Sir, I'll go——
Let me but dry my Eyes, and I will go;
Eudoſia, this unhappy Bride ſhall go,
Thus like a Victim crown'd and doom'd to bleed,
I'll wait you to the Altar, wed the Emperour,
And if he pleaſes, lie within his Arms.

Leont. Thou art my Child agen.

Athen. But do not, Sir, imagine that any Charms,
Or Threatnings ſhall compel me
Never to think of poor *Varanes* more:
No, my *Varanes:* No——
While I have Breath, I will remember thee:
To thee alone I will my Thoughts confine,
And all my Meditations ſhall be thine:
The Image of thy Woes my Soul ſhall fill,
Fate and my End, and thy Remembrance ſtill;
As in ſome Pop'lar Shade the Nightingale,
With piercing Moans does her loſt Young bewail,
Which the rough Hind, obſerving as they lay
Warm in their Downy Neſt, had ſtoln away,
But ſhe in mournful Sounds does ſtill complain,
Sings all the Night, tho' all her Songs are vain,
And ſtill renews her miſerable ſtrain:
So my *Varanes*, 'till my Death comes on,
Shall ſad *Eudoſia* thy dear Loſs bemoan. [*Ex.* Athenais, Atticus.

SCENE II.

Enter Varanes.

Vraa. 'Tis Night, dead Night, and weary Nature lies
So fast, as if she never were to rise:
No breath of Wind now whispers through the Trees;
No noise at Land, nor murmur in the Seas;
Lean Wolves forget to howl at Night's pale Noon;
No wakeful Dogs bark at the silent Moon:
Nor 'bay the Ghosts that glide with Horror by,
To view the Caverns where their Bodies lie,
The Ravens perch, and no Presages give;
Nor to the Windows of the dying cleave.
The Owls forget to scream, no midnight sound
Calls drowsie Echo from the hollow ground;
In Vaults the walking Fires extinguisht lie;
The Stars, Heav'ns Centry, wink and seem to die.
Such universal Silence spreads below,
Through the vast Shades where I am doom'd to go;
Nor shall I need a Violence to wound:
The Storm is here that drives me on the Ground,
Sure means to make the Soul and Body part,
A burning Fever, and a broken Heart.
What, hoa, *Aranthes!* [*Enter* Aranthes.
I sent thee to the Apartment of
Athenais! I sent thee, did I not, to be admitted?

Aran. You did, my Lord; but oh
I fear to give you an account.

Vara. Alas!
Aranthes, I am got on the other side
Of this bad World; and now am past all fear.
O ye avenging Gods, is there a Plague
Among your hoarded Bolts and heaps of Vengeance
Beyond the mighty Loss of *Athenais*?
'Tis contradiction, speak, then speak, *Aranthes.*
For all misfortunes, if compar'd with that,
Will make *Varanes* smile——

Aranth. My Lord, the Empress,
Crown'd and adorn'd with the Imperial Robes,
At this dead time of Night with silent Pomp,
As they design'd from all to keep it secret,
But chiefly sure from you; I say the Empress
Is now conducted by the General.

Atticus and her Father, to the Temple,
There to eſpouſe th' Emperor, *Theodoſius*.
Vara. Say'ſt thou? is't certain! hah.
Arant. Moſt certain, Sir, I ſaw 'em in proceſſion.
Vara. Give me thy Sword, malicious Fate! O Fortune!
O giddy Chance! O turn of Love and Greatneſs!
Marry'd! ſhe has kept her Promiſe now indeed;
And oh her pointed Fame and nice Revenge,
Have reach'd their end. No *Aranthes!* no!
I will not ſtay the lazy Execution
Of a ſlow Fever: Give me thy Hand, and ſwear
By all the Love and Duty that thou ow'ſt me,
To obſerve the laſt Commands that I ſhall give thee;
Stir not againſt my purpoſe, as thou fear'ſt
My Anger and Diſdain; Nor dare to oppoſe me
With troubleſome unneceſſary formal Reaſons;
For what my Thought has doom'd, my Hand ſhall ſeal.
I charge thee hold it ſtedfaſt to my Heart,
Fixt as the Fate that throws me on the Point.
Tho' I have liv'd a *Perſian*, I will fall
As fair, as fearleſs, and as full reſolv'd
As any *Greek* or *Roman* of 'em all.
Aranth. What you command is terrible but ſacred,
And to atone for this too cruel Duty,
My Lord, I'll follow you———
Vara. I charge thee not!
But when I am dead take the attending Slaves,
And bear me, with my Blood diſtilling down,
Streight to the Temple; lay me, O *Aranthes!*
Lay my cold Coarſe at *Athenais*'s Feet,
And ſay, O why, why, do my Eyes run o'er!
Say with my lateſt Gaſp I groan'd for Pardon.
Juſt here my Friend, hold faſt, and fix the Sword;
I feel the Artery, where the Life-Blood lies;
It heaves againſt the Point———Now, O ye Gods,
If for the greatly wretched you have room,
Prepare my place, for dauntleſs lo I come!
The force of Love thus makes the Mortal Wound,
And *Athenais* ſends me to the Ground. [*Kills himſelf.*

SCENE III. *The outward part of the Temple.*

Enter Pulcheria *and* Julia *at one Door*, Marcian *and* Lucius *at another.*

Pulch. Look *Julia*, ſee the penſive *Marcian* comes;
'Tis to my wiſh, I muſt no longer loſe him,
Leſt he ſhould leave the Court indeed: he looks
As if ſome mighty ſecret work'd within him,
And labour'd for a Vent; inſpire me Woman,
That what my Soul deſires above the World,
May ſeem impos'd and forc'd on my Affections——

Luc. I ſay ſhe loves you, and ſhe ſtays to hear it
From your own Mouth: Now, in the Name of all
The Gods at once, my Lord, why are you ſilent?
Take heed, Sir, mark your opportunity;
For if the Woman lays it in your way,
And you over-ſee it, ſhe is loſt for ever.

Marc. Madam, I come to take my eternal leave;
Your Doom has baniſht me, and I obey:
The Court and I ſhake Hands, and now we part,
Never to ſee each other more; the Court
Where I was born, and bred a Gentleman:
No more, till your Illuſtrious Bounty rais'd me,
And drew the Earth-born Vapour to the Clouds:
But, as the Gods ordain'd it, I have loſt,
I know not how, through Ignorance, your Grace:
And now the Exhalation of my Glory
Is quite conſum'd and vaniſht into Air.

Pulch. Proceed, Sir——

Marc. Yet let theſe Gods that doom'd me to diſpleaſe you,
Be Witneſſes how much I honour you——
Thus, worſhipping, I ſwear by your bright ſelf,
I leave this infamous Court with more content
Than Fools and Flatterers ſeek it. But, oh Heaven!
I cannot go if ſtill your hate purſues me;
Yes, I declare it is impoſſible,
To go to Baniſhment without your Pardon.

Pulch. You have it, *Marcian*; is there ought beſide,
That you would ſpeak, for I am free to hear?

Marc. Since I ſhall never ſee you more, what hinders
But my laſt words ſhould here proteſt the Truth?
Know then, Imperial Princeſs, matchleſs Woman,
Since firſt you caſt your Eyes upon my meanneſs,
Ev'n till you rais'd me to my envy'd height,

I have in ſecret lov'd you———

Pulch. Is this *Marcian*?

Marc. You frown! but I am ſtill prepar'd for all;
I ſay I lov'd you, and I love you ſtill,
More than my Life, and equal to my Glory;
Methinks the warring Spirit that inſpires
This Frame, the very Genius of old *Rome!*
That makes me talk without the fear of Death,
And drives my daring Soul to acts of Honour.
Flames in your Eyes! our Thoughts too are a-kin,
Ambitious, fierce, and burn alike for Glory:
Now, by the Gods, I lov'd you in your Fury,
In all the Thunder that quite riv'd my hopes,
I lov'd you moſt, ev'n when you did deſtroy me.
Madam, I've ſpoke my heart, and cou'd ſay more,
But that I ſee it grieves you, your high Blood
Frets at the Arrogance and ſawcy Pride
Of this bold Vagabond: may the Gods forgive me:
Farewell; a worthier General may ſucceed me;
But none more faithful to the Emperour's Intereſt,
Than him you are pleas'd to call the Traytor, *Marcian.*

Pulch. Come back, you have ſubtilly play'd your part indeed;
For firſt, th' Emperour whom you lately ſchool'd,
Reſtores you your Commiſſion; next commands you,
As you're a Subject not to leave the Court,
Next, but oh Heav'n! which way ſhall I expreſs
His cruel Pleaſure, he that is ſo mild
In all things elſe, yet obſtinate in this,
Spite of my Tears, my Birth, and my Diſdain,
Commands me, as I dread his high Diſpleaſure,
O *Marcian!* to receive you as my Husband.

Marc. Ha, *Lucius!* what, what does my Fate intend?

Luc. Purſue her, Sir, 'tis as I ſaid, ſhe yields,
And rages that you follow her no faſter!

Pulch. Is then at laſt my great Authority,
And my intruſted Pow'r, declin'd to this?
Yet oh my Fate, what way can I avoid it!
He charg'd me ſtreight to wait him to the Temple;
And there reſolve! oh *Marcian!* on this Marriage.
Now generous Soldier, as you're truly noble;
O help me forth, loſt in this Labyrinth;
Help me to looſe this more than *Gordian* Knot,
And make me and your ſelf for ever happy.

Marc. Madam, I'll ſpeak as briefly as I can,
And as a Soldier ought, the only way
To help this Knot is yet to tye it faſter.

Since

Since then the Emperor has reſolv'd you mine,
For which I will for ever thank the Gods,
And make this Holy-day throughout my Life,
I take him at his word, and claim his promiſe;
The Empire of the World ſhall not redeem you.
Nay, weep not, Madam, though my out ſide's rough,
Yet, by thoſe Eyes, your Soldier has a Heart
Compaſſionate and tender as a Virgins,
Ev'n now it bleeds to ſee thoſe falling Sorrows,
Perhaps this Grief may move the Emperour
To a Repentance! Come then to the Tryal;
For by my Arms, my Life, and dearer Honour,
If you go back when given me by his Hand,
In diſtant Wars my Fate I will deplore,
And *Marcian*'s Name ſhall ne'er be heard of more. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE, *the Temple.*

Theodoſius, Athenais, Atticus *joyning their hands* —— Marcian, Pulcheria, Lucius, Julia, Delia, *&c.* Leontine.

Attic. *The more than Gordian knot is ty'd,*
Which Death's ſtrong Arm ſhall ne'er divide;
For when to bliſs ye wafted are,
Your Spirits ſhall be wedded there.
Waters are loſt, and Fires will die;
But Love alone can Fate defie.

Enter Aranthes *with the Body of* Varanes.

Arant. Where is the Empreſs? Where ſhall I find *Eudoſia?*
By Fate I am ſent to tell that cruel Beauty,
She has rob'd the World of Fame; her Eyes have giv'n
A blaſt to the big Bloſſom of the War;
Behold him there nipt in his flowry Morn,
Compell'd to break his promiſe of a Day;
A Day that Conqueſt would have made her Boaſt;
Behold her Lawrel wither'd to the Root,
Canker'd and kill'd by *Athenais* ſcorn.
Athen. Dead! dead, *Varanes!*
Theo. O ye Eternal Pow'rs
That guide the World! why do you ſhock our Reaſon,
With acts like theſe that lay our Thoughts in duſt?
Forgive me Heav'n this ſtart, or elevate
Imagination more, and make it nothing.
Alas! alas, *Varanes!* But ſpeak, *Aranthes,*

The

The manner of his Fate: Groans choke my words;
But ſpeak, and we will anſwer thee with Tears.

Arant. His Fever would, no doubt, by this have done
What ſome few minutes paſt his Sword perform'd,
He heard from me your progreſs to the Temple,
How you deſign'd at midnight to deceive him,
By a Clandeſtine Marriage: But, my Lord,
Had you beheld his Racks at my Relation;
Or had your Empreſs ſeen him in thoſe Torments,
When from his dying Eyes, ſwoln to the Brim,
The big round drops rowl'd down his manly Face;
When from his hallowed Breaſt a murmuring Croud
Of groans ruſh'd forth, and echo'd, All is well:
Then had you ſeen him! O ye cruel Gods!
Ruſh on the Sword I held againſt his Breaſt,
And dye it to the Hilts, with theſe laſt words——
Bear me to *Athenais*——

Athen. Give me way, my Lord,
I have moſt ſtrictly kept my promiſe with you,
I am your Bride, and you can ask no more,
Or if you did, I am paſt the power to give:
But here! oh here! on his cold bloody Breaſt,
Thus let me breath my laſt.

Theo. O Empreſs, what, what can this tranſport mean?
Are theſe our Nuptials! theſe my promis'd Joys?

Athen. Forgive me, Sir, this laſt reſpect I apy
Theſe ſad remains——And oh thou mighty Spiit,
If yet thou art not mingled with the Stars,
Look down and hear the wretched *Athenais*,
When thou ſhalt know, before I gave conſent
To this indecent Marriage, I had taken
Into my Veins a cold and deadly Draught,
Which ſoon would render me, alas, unfit
For the warm Joys of an Imperial Lover,
And make me ever thine! yet keep my word
With *Theodoſius*. Wilt thou not forgive me?

Theo. Poiſon'd to free thee from the Emperor!
Oh, *Athenais!* thou haſt done a deed
That tears my Heart! what have I done againſt thee,
That thou ſhould'ſt brand me thus with Infamy
And everlaſting ſhame! Thou might'ſt have made,
Thy choice without this cruel act of Death,
I left thee to thy will? and in requital
Thou haſt murder'd all my Fame——

Athen. O pardon me!
I lay my dying Body at your Feet,

And beg, my Lord, with my laſt ſighs intreat you
To impute the fault, if 'tis a fault, to love;
And the ingratitude of *Athenais*,
To her too cruel Stars: Remember too,
I begg'd you would not let me ſee the Prince,
Preſaging what has happen'd; yet my word,
As to our Nuptials was inviolable.

Theo. Ha! ſhe is going! ſee her languiſhing Eyes
Draw in their Beams; the ſleep of death is on her.

Athen. Farewell, my Lord! alas! alas, *Varanes*,
To embrace thee now is not immodeſty;
Or if it were, I think my bleeding Heart,
Would make me criminal in Death to claſp thee,
Break all the tender niceties of Honour,
To fold thee thus, and warm thee into Life,
For oh what Man, like him, cou'd Woman move!
O Prince belov'd! O Spirit moſt divine!
Thus by my Death, I give thee all my Love,
And ſeal my Soul and Body ever thine—— [*Dies.*

Theo. O *Marcian!* O *Pulcheria!* did not the Power,
Whom we adore plant all his Thunder-bolts
Againſt Self-murderers, I would periſh too:
But as I am, I ſwear to leave the Empire:
To thee, my Siſter, I bequeath the World;
And yet a gift more great the Gallant *Marcian!*
On then my Friend, now ſhew thy *Roman* Spirit:
As to her Sex, fair *Athenais* was,
Be thou to thine a Pattern of true Honour,
Thus we'll atone for all the preſent Crimes,
That yet it may be ſaid in after-times,
No Age with ſuch Examples cou'd compare,
So Great, ſo Good, ſo Vertuous, and ſo Fair!

[*Ex. Omnes.*

FINIS.

Epilogue.

THrice happy they that never writ before;
How pleas'd and bold they quit the ſafer ſhore:
Like ſome new Captain of the City Bands,
That with big looks in Finsbury *Commands,*
Swell'd, with huge Ale he cries, beat, beat a Drum,
Pox o' the French-*King, uds bud let him come:*
Give me ten thouſand Redcoats, and alloo,
We'll firk his Crequi *and his* Conde *too.*
Thus the young Scriblers, Mankinds ſenſe diſdain;
For ignorance is ſure to make 'em vain,
But far from Vanity, or dang'rous pride;
Our cautious Poet courts you to his ſide:
For why ſhould you be ſcorn'd, to whom are due,
All the good days that ever Authors knew.
If ever gay 'tis you that make 'em fine;
The Pit and Boxes make the Poet dine,
And he ſcarce drinks but of the Criticks Wine.
Old Writers ſhould not for vain glory ſtrive
But like old Miſtreſſes think how to thrive,
Be fond of ev'ry thing their Keepers ſay,
At leaſt till they can live without a Play.
Like one that knows the Trade, and has been bit;
She doats and fawns upon her wealthy Cit;
And ſwears ſhe loves him meerly for his Wit.
Another more untaught than a Walloon,
Antick and ugly, like an old Baboon;
She ſwears is an accompliſht Beau-garſon,
Turns with all winds, and ſails with all deſires;
All hearts in City, Town, and Court, ſhe fires,
Young callow Lords, lean Knights, and driv'ling Squires.
She in reſiſtleſs flattery finds her ends,
Gives thanks for Fools, and makes ye all her Friends,
So ſhould wiſe Poets ſooth an awkard Age,
For they are Proſtitutes upon the Staze:
To ſtand on points were fooliſh and ill-bred,
As for a Lady to be nice in Bed:
Your wills alone muſt their performance meaſure,
And you may turn 'em ev'ry way for pleaſure.

FINIS.

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